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THE CONDEMNED CELL.

IT is an old truth that the annals of real crime beat fiction. The Rookwood of fact distances the *Rookwood* of invention. The *causes célèbres* of the Criminal Courts are the best Standard Novels. The Medea of real life, the CELESTINA of Islington, is the highest tragedy, and PALMER is convicted of greater crimes than BULWER'S Lucretia. The Earlom of STIRLING case, and the trial about the SMYTHE property, viewed merely as effective dramatic plots, transcend in interest even M. SUE'S elaborate fictions of recondite and tangled wickedness. GODWIN never wove such a web of complex and contrasted effects—never attempted a combination of hypocrisies so difficult to sustain, or worked out in detail a story of such tragic interest—as the life of JOHN SADLEIR. Mrs. KELLY'S life and death read an awful lesson, more impressive to an age of external decencies and vanished proprieties than any that the novelist's art could enforce. The world of modern society seems to reserve its grandest efforts for crime. There is, so social observers tell us, nothing very remarkable in the age as regards its philosophy, its literature, or its poetry. We have attained a level, if a high one, in most pursuits; and mediocrity is the rule both in statesmanship and in strategy. Crime alone is now-a-days transcendental and exceptional. We leave it to abler or more fanciful analysts to reconcile the paradox that we are at once so commonplace and so gigantic. We may be told that great crimes, such as those which are now constantly occurring, are a reaction against the dull conventional respectabilities on which we pride ourselves—that they are providentially timed as a protest against our growing self-satisfaction, and against the unhealthy complacency with which society is apt to dwell on its real or assumed optimizing tendencies. This is the Laureate's theory of the age; and certainly there is much moral force and impressiveness in these sudden and violent outbursts of the volcano. Private crimes of the first magnitude are a rebuke to our indolent acquiescence in the sufficiency of public decency. Not only do they enforce the world-old lesson that sin bears its legitimate fruit, but in their moral details they demonstrate to society the sort of principles and pursuits—involving, essentially and ultimately, the extremest possibilities of human wickedness—which it either countenances or encourages, or, at any rate, never proscribes.

This is the real value of the PALMER case. In its obvious and external aspect, indeed, it transcends most of the recorded criminal trials. In its social enormity, it even exceeds the famous *oyer* of poisoning—Sir THOMAS OVERBURY'S murder. In the Countess of SOMERSET'S case, there were perhaps political, and certainly darker, motives. Criminal love and criminal ambition marked the hideous tragedy of the Tower. State secrets, and even the honour of a Crown, were at stake in the prolonged agonies of OVERBURY. In the death of JOHN PARSONS COOK, nothing further was involved than the vulgar necessity of helping robbery by murder. Viewed simply, the act of murder was only a means by which the murderer hoped to appropriate certain sums of money. Revenge, as in RUSH'S case—retaliation, as in THURTELL'S—the *furens quid femina possit* which marked the fiendish crime of Mrs. MANNING—none of these accompaniments present themselves in connexion with WILLIAM PALMER. And yet he will occupy, perhaps, the foremost place in the hideous ranks of English criminals. Poisoning is the very greatest of social wrongs, for none more fatally tends to dislocate society; but poisoning by a medical attendant is a crime, in some respects only equalled by the drugged chalice of BORGIA himself. The poisoned host of Italy, and the strychnia-pills of Rugeley, stand apart from all other horrors in the records of crime, because they alike impair confidence in the ministers and guardians of life.

A further specialty of the PALMER case is that it serves, in a very terrible way, to embody and give force to suspicions which men have hardly dared to whisper to themselves. Who knows, it is asked, whether secret poisoning is not comparatively common? What difficulty, hesitation, and uncertainty surround the guarantees which science offers against the detection of this crime! At all events, conflicting opinions are hazarded, and conscientiously maintained, as to the possibility of detecting the presence and operation of certain deadly drugs. Great medical authorities are at issue. After a trial of unexampled duration, with the aid of the subtlest intellects and the most practised investigators into the most difficult branch of medical inquiry, the direct and immediate subject of investigation—the fact of death from poison—is arrived at and proved by moral at least as much as by physical evidence. The decisive material proof—the discovery of actual poison in the corpse—is not obtained; and it appears that, under certain circumstances, it never can be obtained. The result of the scientific evidence is, that COOK dies with certain symptoms which are utterly different from those of any recognised ailment or affection—which always accompany the administration of strychnia—but which, for anything that science can positively aver to the contrary, might possibly accompany some unknown and unobserved disease. It is proved, however, in other ways, that motive and opportunity existed for PALMER to murder COOK. The purchase of strychnia is traced to him—the actual existence of a subsidiary drug (antimony) in the tissues of the murdered man is fully proved—and the murderer is directly connected with the administration of this antimony, by distinct proof of another person having been affected by it. Most righteously and most justly has WILLIAM PALMER been convicted. A more atrocious murderer we believe never ascended the scaffold, nor one whose guilt was more completely and conclusively ascertained. Yet the evidence, though in the mass most ample and decisive as regards the individual crime, is not of that nature which can go far to allay suspicions. Cases may be easily imagined in which PALMER'S infatuated blindness of purchasing poison in open day would be avoided; and, on the other hand, as the nice and delicate precision required to identify and discriminate the tetanic convulsions arising from strychnia must often be unattainable, it is possible that many cases of natural death may be popularly connected with this subtle and terrible poison.

Under this aspect, it is melancholy to reflect on what would have been, or rather must have been, the result of PALMER'S trial, had it not been connected with his and COOK'S pecuniary antecedents—with the purchase of the strychnia—with the prisoner's previous career and ruined circumstances—with the Insurance transactions—and with his subsequent possession of funds. On the merely medical and scientific evidence, a conviction was impossible, or in the highest degree improbable. And in its social aspects, it is a grave and painful consideration that this horrid crime—or, perhaps, this series of crimes—connects itself with an increasing body of evidence illustrating the most frightful abuse and perversion of that great and beneficent institution—Life Insurance. With these moral results of PALMER'S case, legislation and argument seem alike powerless to deal. Social confidence reels under the blow.

On the other hand, there are counterbalancing moral lessons to be gained from the fate of PALMER. This monster's career shows what a hell of crime may be festering and seething beneath a life, if not of moral decencies, yet of the conventional decorum which is tolerated by the habits of the world. PALMER only carries out a recognised form of English life. For years, he has been running the course of the betting and racing man. He is an individual of no ordinary character. Born of a family in easy or opulent circum-

stances, educated for and practising a respectable profession, he abandons all these higher prospects, and sacrifices the certainties of his calling for the turf and its accompaniments. He makes horse-racing and betting—or betting rather than horse-racing—his means of livelihood. Of course, no man can make an income out of the mere profits of the stakes which he can fairly win. The horses that PALMER kept were scarcely more than a blind—perhaps, at first, a blind even to himself. Betting was henceforth his business—PALMER'S life tells the rest. A man who without capital, that is, without a fortune to throw away, pursues betting as a calling, is not on the road to ruin—he starts with ruin, and with fraud for his capital. The cycle is invariable. Associates who are partly confederates and partly pigeons—frequent losses, precarious gains, and ceaseless debts—the convenient money-lender, and accommodation bills at sixty per cent. per month—the net of destruction steadily closing—forgery upon forgery postponing but not averting the inevitable day—hopeless waiting for the retrieving event which never comes, and trembling expectation of the days of renewal which arrive most punctually—in satiable greed of “the money which must be found, even if I give 1000*l.* for it”—and then the horrible suggestions and facilities which life insurance offers, and the deadly despair with which the temptation is accepted—such are the incidents and accompaniments of the life of the professional gambler.

And now comes out the most frightful characteristic of great crime—its perpetrator seems to be a mere machine. His moral nature is obliterated. Pity, remorse, and natural feeling are extinct—the man becomes a living corpse—he is simply possessed. He acts mechanically, and at the will of something beyond and above him. He goes on heaping murder upon murder; and all in the dullest, coldest, and most unflinching way. He mixes the poisoned draught, and sits calm, impassive, and collected by his victim's bed, watching his agonies with scarcely the interest of curiosity. People may talk of PALMER'S secret feelings—we believe that he had absolutely none. He was and is a mere *cadaver*. He is only a betting man, with bills to renew—all else is a blank. He only sees the money-lender's shop and settling day. This world and the next, duty, honour, his own life and the life of all that he ought to value—the life of wife, brother, or friend—all is shut up in the single necessity of getting funds for Mr. PRATT—all is nothing to PALMER except as a means to meet his engagements. So is it “when a man is smitten with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart, and he gropes at noonday as the blind gropeth in darkness.” He and the heavens above him are alike brass. He is cool and unflinching at COOK'S bedside, at the *post-mortem* examination, at the trial in the cell; and we doubt not he will be equally cool on the scaffold. And here a single thought occurs. We are not disposed, even in this most hideous case, to innovate on the tranquil and unimpassioned apathy of our practice of capital punishment—we do not suggest, even in the instance of WILLIAM PALMER, the revival of the gibbet, nor do we hint at more exquisite punishments for this unparalleled criminal. But we would read a lesson to survivors—we would press its moral in the betting ring and the money-lender's chambers. What if, for once, the scaffold were erected on Newmarket heath? What if Mr. PRATT, Solicitor, of Queen-street, May Fair, were invited to assist at his client's obsequies? The tempter and the victim ought to have another meeting at least, in this present world. They have not been very lovely in their lives; and it were a pity that in the death-scene they should be divided.

PARMA.

THERE is one commonwealth in Europe—the Empire of Austria—in which civil government is on the point of extinction. The right of punishment must always be the ultimate test of power; and in Austria, what was once the civil power has, as nearly as possible, withdrawn from the cognizance of offences, resigning its prerogatives to military authority on the one hand, and to the spiritual arm on the other. It is probable that the progress of this revolution, in both the directions which it has taken, has gone very far beyond the expectations of its authors; but they appear to look upon the disappointment of their anticipations with very different degrees of dissatisfaction. No person connected with the government of Austria seems to regard it as in the least unfortunate that the magistrate is every day becoming more distinctly subordinate to the soldier. Though it can hardly have been expected that, even in the hereditary

provinces, the Law military and the Court Martial would steadily displace municipal jurisprudence and the civil tribunal, the rulers of the Empire are understood to be rather pleased than otherwise with what they seem to consider a simplification of their system. They have staked everything on their army, and they care not how soon the attention of the world is directed to the character of their venture. But, on the other hand, it is clear that they are not a little ashamed and annoyed at the advantages which the Concordat has been the means of securing to the priesthood. The success of JOSEPH THE SECOND'S ordinances had been so complete as to conceal altogether from the Austrian Government the ambition and the latent energy which must have been long underlying the enforced quietude of the clergy. The Concordat turns out, however, to have unloosed a power with which neither the bureaucracy nor the military authorities are in the least equal to coping; and they now appear to regard its aggressions with an irritation and alarm proportioned to their former ignorance of its character and capacity. Among the many illustrative stories which have gained currency in Europe, the latest has reference to a dispute between the military and spiritual dignitaries of a place in Lombardy, concerning the child of a Jew, which the mother, who is since dead, had secretly baptized in its infancy. The clergy claimed a right to remove the child from its father's custody, and to educate it in their own faith. They were partially successful; and we see that a portion of the English press is indulging its commonplace religious liberalism by invectives against their bigotry. But we cannot persuade ourselves that they are greatly to be blamed for asserting such a right, if it existed. The real culprit is the Austrian Government, which has abandoned one of the highest duties of civil rule—the obligation to protect liberty of conscience against the extravagances of which conscience itself is sometimes guilty.

When a Government like that of Austria, which has voluntarily retrograded towards that very arrangement of the powers of State which characterized the worst portion of the middle ages, is called in to exercise an irregular authority in another commonwealth, itself already disordered, it is easy to imagine that the result is something like a return of chaos. Austria does, in fact, at this moment, direct the entire government of the Duchy of Parma, through an occupying force which the DUCHESS-REGENT has invited; and, to judge from certain documents which have reached us, the state of affairs which has arisen under the occupation is more like the production of a sort of impish malignity than of any human agency. Between a timid and bigoted woman, exercising her power with more than feminine caprice, and an ill-tempered military martinet determined to be supreme, and yet too much afraid of European diplomacy to dare to be so quite openly, Parma and the States dependent on it appear to be suffering under a misgovernment more irritatingly meddlesome than that of the POPE, more mercilessly severe than that of the KING of NAPLES, and less equal to the ordinary duties of justice and protection than either of them. The right of personal freedom has departed. People are seized without warrant, kept in prison on bread and water for a month, and then set at liberty without the slightest explanation. The other day, more than a hundred young men, against whom there was not even the shadow of a charge, were arrested and marched off under a guard to Mantua, where they now remain at large. The Austrian general gives no account of the proceeding except that the air of Mantua is better for the cure of youthful liberalism than that of Parma. In one case, the person removed was the wrong man, and the Austrians allowed that there had been a mistake, and promised to set him soon at liberty; but his family were coolly informed that any formal admission of the error was out of the question. To walk too fast in the street, to walk too slow, to stand still, to be abroad after sunset, to look sullenly at an Austrian officer, are now crimes punishable by imprisonment or deportation. So monstrous indeed are some of the acts of oppression reported, that it is hard to believe that the general of the occupying force would either venture, or suffer the DUCHESS-REGENT to venture, to such lengths, if he did not fancy that he enjoyed extraordinary opportunities for setting public opinion at defiance. He is satisfied, we imagine, that the sympathy of Europe will, under any circumstances, be denied to a population among whom the assassins of its late Sovereign and of two conspicuous members of the Government are still lurking. But Europe is not likely to forget the character of the unhappy Prince whose death came first in this series

of assassinations. In a small despotically-governed State, the habits of the sovereign are always of importance; but CHARLES III. tried to be in constant personal contact with a certain class of his subjects, and if the spectacle of the foulest vices can do anything to deprave a population, the late Duke of PARMA supplied the springs of demoralization in unexampled plentifulness. It is morally certain that his murder was the sequel of some low intrigue, and it is likely that the same men who were his assassins were prompted by their impunity to the outrages which succeeded. He was beyond all question the victim of some one belonging to the dregs of the population, and it is precisely the dregs of the population that are most tenderly indulged by the DUCHESS-REGENT and her Austrian assessor. They have little to complain of a Government which carefully provides for their amusement, eagerly solicits their applause, and grants them immunity in every disturbance of the public peace which is unconcerned with politics.

There is one great reason why Parma should be treated with extraordinary severity by the Power which has now assumed dominion over it. This little State, from its geographical position, has become the field in which the forms of opinion which will soon divide all Italy are fighting their first conflict. In Parma, the touchstone of parties is affection for Sardinia. And the more we attend to the state of feeling in Italy, the more convinced shall we be that the real contest everywhere is destined to be between the types of government represented by Sardinia on the one hand, and by Austria, such as she has made herself since 1848, on the other. A good deal of the sympathy felt in England for Sardinia has been evoked by her conflict with the See of Rome, and many of us see in her present relations with PIUS IX. a counterpart of the dispute between HENRY VIII. and CLEMENT. But the parallel, like most historical parallels, is deceptive, because the Popedom is no longer to be feared, in Italy at all events, for the direct influence which it exercises over the conscience of the subjects of independent Princes. It is simply a despotic and military government, of an extraordinarily bad kind. The real similarity of Sardinia to England arises from her having, like England, depressed military and spiritual authority to their proper level. And her true importance in Italy proceeds, not from her temporary quarrel with the Holy See, but from her permanent and necessary antagonism to every government which has renounced, or never obtained, the supremacy of the civil power—the most precious acquisition of modern civilization. So long as Sardinia is the only really civilized State to the south of the Alps, it will be vain for Austrian bayonets to oppose her progress in Italy, and for MR. DISRAELI and his newspaper to undermine her popularity in England.

THE SUPREME COURT OF APPEAL.

THE Report of the Committee on the Appellate Jurisdiction of the House of Lords is a document of the smallest possible value. The proposal of an incomplete remedy for an evil which is neither admitted nor denied, loses even the little interest which might attach to it on its merits, from the consideration that Parliament is by no means likely to carry out the scheme of the Committee. The inquiry itself originated in a mere accident. For some unknown reason, the Cabinet wished to try the experiment of tampering with the hereditary character of the peerage. The unsatisfactory character of the Appellate Jurisdiction furnished the Government with a pretext for interference; and it was thought that a constitutional innovation might be introduced under cover of a plausible practical reform. The instinct of self-preservation aroused the peers to resist the Ministerial measure as an anomalous and undue extension of the Royal prerogative; but, as Lord DERBY was unwilling to leave his political opponents the credit of an exclusive zeal for the improvement of judicial institutions, the Law Lords were forced to concur in the appointment of a Select Committee, and to trust to their own superior knowledge and skill to baffle the efforts of revolutionary malcontents. It is said that the evidence adduced has been by no means agreeable to the members of the supreme tribunal. Notwithstanding the paragraph apparently contributed to the Report by the Law Lord who once sat for the greater part of a session alone, it is not satisfactory to the profession or to the country that a single individual should have the power of reversing the decisions of all the judges in the kingdom. Some of the witnesses may have told unpleasant truths as to the operation of the existing system, and the

lay members of the Committee probably insisted on some ostensible change; but their learned colleagues have taken care that innovation shall not be carried to excess.

After a recital of the general efficiency of the tribunal to be reformed, the Report proceeds to ensure its own failure by recommending the creation of two new functionaries, with salaries of 6000*l.* a-year. A few weeks since, Parliament decidedly rejected the proposal that three or four ecclesiastical judges should be paid for doing nothing; and it is not probable, therefore, that the House of Commons will provide large salaries for ex-judges who already enjoy liberal pensions. If, on the other hand, the additional Deputy-Speakers are to be considered substantive and active judges, it may suffice to remark that the appeal business of the House of Lords is not sufficiently large to compensate for the proposed expense. The materials for the constitution of an ultimate Court of Appeal are not unlimited. Permanent judges seldom retire, except under the pressure of age and infirmity; and ex-Chancellors receive a pension amply sufficient to secure their services to the country. Moreover, all the most competent functionaries already belong to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and, except on political or sentimental grounds, there is not the smallest reason for providing a separate Court under the name of the House of Lords. The Report recommends the elimination of lay-Peers, and the continuance of the sittings to hear appeals during a part of the Parliamentary vacation. In other words, the fictions which connected the authority of the Law Lords with the ancient privileges of the Great Council are to be rudely destroyed, but the result is to remain after the removal of the causes from which it arose.

To increase the supply of Law Lords, it is proposed that the Crown should be empowered to create four Life Peerages at a time; and it may be admitted that, if the remainder of the project is carried out, some such machinery will be necessary. There is, of course, no constitutional objection to any constitutional change deliberately effected by the authority of Parliament; but it may be doubted whether the House of Lords will sanction a measure which tends, to a certain extent, to alter the character of that body. It has always been assumed that hereditary succession is of the essence of the House of Lords. The opponents of the institution have directed their arguments and invectives against the alleged anomaly involved in the transmission of political power from father to son; and its champions have, in like manner, defended the peerage, on the ground of its permanence and stability. No logic or ingenuity can persuade the English nation that an ancient and existing establishment is without some justification or reason; but a partial and casual characteristic of any system is evidently not necessary, although it may be beneficial. It is obviously futile to appeal to the Episcopal Bench as already presenting an exception to the hereditary constitution of the House of Lords. The prelates have an ancient and fixed succession of their own; and the titles of Canterbury, York, and Winchester are older by centuries than those of Norfolk, Shrewsbury, or Hereford.

If the peers accept the new colleagues whom it is proposed to give them, the concession will be dictated by exclusive and oligarchical prejudices. It is well known that the great lawyers who add so much to the real importance of the House are not regarded by the older members of the order with unmixed complacency. The low-born hero in the old story remarked, "I am the founder of my own family;" and in popular histories it is recorded that the young King treated HENRY II. as his inferior, on the ground that the son of a king was superior to the son of a count. There is no doubt that, on the assumption that an aristocracy is to be maintained, blood, like wine, improves by keeping; and the grandson of a Lord Chancellor, though a less able man than his ancestor, may feel himself more thoroughly identified with the order into which he is born. So far as their own interests are concerned, the peers will have to choose between prejudice and prudence. Life peerages would relegate aspiring lawyers into a secondary position; but on the other hand, they might render hereditary succession less absolutely secure. If the innovation is once admitted, it will be asked why the same system should not be followed when a general, an admiral, a statesman, is introduced into the House of Lords; and the analogy may be carried out until all the most eminent members of the House belong to the inferior caste. It is easy to foresee the use which might be made by democratic agitators or Ministerial innovators of a contrast

between merit and fortune. Much may be said in favour of such a euthanasia for an institution which is scarcely calculated for immortality; but it is at least desirable that Parliament should act with its eyes open, and it is hardly worth while to inaugurate a great constitutional change for the purpose of postponing the transfer of appellate jurisdiction from the House of Lords to the Committee of Council.

In all probability, the Report will be allowed to drop without any more serious effort to carry out its provisions than is involved in the formal production of an abortive Bill. It is evident on its face that some members of the Committee wished that something should be done, while the Law Lords resolved that as little should be done as possible, and that the premises of the Report should represent their own opinions, although they were forced to accept an unwelcome conclusion. Those who are satisfied with the existing system will not initiate even a modest reform, and Lord DERBY will scarcely prove a zealous advocate of a Bill for the creation of Life Peerages. The LORD CHANCELLOR and those of his colleagues who took an active part in the Wensleydale experiment, may naturally feel called upon to find some method of releasing their nominee from his ambiguous and uncomfortable position. Even an *ex-officio* or Act of Parliament peerage might be deemed preferable to the titular dignity at present enjoyed by that eminent and learned personage; and it may perhaps have been ascertained that Lord WENSLEYDALE is willing to accept one of the Deputy-Speakerships. It is not likely, however, that either House will be influenced by an appeal to feelings of respect or of compassion. The Crown has in its own hands the remedy for any individual grievance which may have been inflicted; and nothing would be easier than to issue a new patent in the usual form, reconferring the title which has already been created. Precedence and dignity would be derived from the earlier document—Parliamentary rights from the second.

On minor points, the Committee preserve a laudable and judicial impartiality. As regards the claim of the Scotch Judges to participate in the decision of cases arising out of their own law, the Report practically amounts to the proposition that much may be said on both sides of the question. It is not, in fact, easy to introduce Scotch Judges into the House of Lords, and it was unnecessary to remind the House that the Scotch difficulty, like many others, might be got rid of by the transfer of appeals to the Committee of the Privy Council. On the whole, the Committee are of opinion that nothing need be done, but that there is no conclusive reason against doing something. On another question, it also appears that much may be said on both sides. Some lawyers are of opinion that the Judges of the Upper House should, as in the inferior courts, deliver their separate opinions in succession—others hold that a formal judgment, framed by the majority, should be delivered as the sentence of the entire tribunal. The Committee, giving due weight to the rival arguments, arrive at the conclusion that no positive rule can be laid down on the subject, and that the Court must decide for itself. In short, the four possible Life Peerages, and the two certain salaries of 6000*l.*, constitute all the operative part of the scheme. When able men desire to do nothing, they generally succeed; and it is clear that the Law Lords have, for the present, successfully resisted innovation. It is not unlikely that the existing constitution of the Supreme Court of Appeal may survive without change for many years, if the ranks of legal dignitaries are kept full; but the ex-Chancellors, who now control the judicial proceedings of the House, are all advanced in years. With the exception of Lord CRANWORTH, there is no Law Lord under threescore and ten; and at present it seems as if the Appellate Jurisdiction would either die out, or become, as in Lord ELDON's time, vested in the occupant of the woolsack.

LONDON IN FLAMES.

PERHAPS never since 1660 has London seen such a Restoration Day as last Thursday.

O, the twenty-ninth of May,
It was a glorious day,
When the king did enjoy his own again.

HUME talks of "the fond imagination of those who connected the KING's birthday with his triumphant return." And now we have had the Royal birthday, and the old *Tandem Triumphans* banner once more displayed together, though in celebration, we trust, of the restoration of a long peace, not of a worthless and doomed monarchy; and we have also given

utterance to what survives—which is little enough—of that antique cavalier loyalty which long connected Oak-apple Day with household no less than with historical associations. But we have to deal rather with the material than the moral parallel—the contrast between the external aspect of the Caroline and the Victorian rejoicings. So far as quantity goes, of course we have the advantage; but in picturesque and artistic propriety, and in the significance and suitableness of the signs of public congratulation, we suspect that we have but little to boast of. It is the fashion to grumble at London and its manifold deficiencies in all that makes a great capital worthy of the name; and it is also a fashion to grumble at the grumblers. But the whole matter resolves itself into a single fact—London is not a unity. It is not, in any substantial sense, a city at all. It is one neither in site nor in municipal government—it is under no authority—it has neither unity nor personality—and a general illumination can only be a success under certain conditions in which it is not our temper to acquiesce. It must be compulsory—and this does not suit our constitutionalism. And it must be organized and systematic—which does not agree with our individualism. The result is such a display as that of Thursday night—a vast deal of effort and enormous expense, with a net product which is, to say the best of it, only half satisfactory. A general illumination, which is not general, is an absurdity. Had the cost and trouble wasted on gorgeous individual attempts been scattered over the whole area, the general effect would have been eminently enhanced. Probably one half the actual outlay, had it been systematically administered, would have produced greater, and certainly more artistic, results. We cannot congratulate ourselves that taste has yet penetrated our rejoicings, either public or private. As of old, we enjoy ourselves *moult tristement*—it is a matter of business rather than of sentiment. One tradesman sticks up a star because his rival does; and the old traditional V. R.'s, and crowns, and laurel-wreaths, appear because it is the rule of the leading thoroughfares. And where something better might have been expected, as in the Government offices and public buildings, the time-honoured platitudes of the Peace of 1814 are revived for the occasion. A slight, and as far as it goes, a satisfactory, innovation occurs in the glass-drop incrustations of Mr. DEFRIES, and, of course, even the leaden intelligence of the Board of Works could not resist the introduction of gas; yet, with singular inconsistency, they have in some cases combined it with the very opposite idea implied in a lamp ornamentation. Even the small capabilities which we possess for constructive illumination in such erections as the monumental columns, and in our puny attempts at triumphal arches at Temple Bar and at Tyburn, were left unimproved.

Why was not some person of acknowledged taste employed in these decorations? Why, at least among officials, was the whole thing left to the mercies of the housekeeper and porter, who, as it seems, employed the nearest tradesman? In any other country, an artist or architect would have been entrusted with the illumination of the capital; and then, at least, some harmonious effect would have been gained. As usual, however, the City beats the Court. The trophies and blazing *fauteuils* on the lofty steps of the Mansion House represent, as far as we know, the solitary, and rather successful, attempt at picturesque decoration. And so with gas—it is not treated artistically, except in the rarest instances. Lord WARD's magnificent display in Park Lane, for example, was in the very best style. Here, the architectural lines of the building were indicated by threads and beads of fire, and the pillars were wreathed with flaming spirals. Something of the sort—though less effectively, because in oil lamps, and because the details were starved and pinched—was attempted at the Royal Exchange. But, speaking generally, even the most palpable opportunities were lost. Trafalgar Square did not present any architectural combination. No advantage was taken of the inviting facilities offered by that site for erecting Venetian masts, and for crowning the terrace with standard *pots de feu*, which the chief Government architect, Sir CHARLES BARRY, has himself made part of the original *ordonnance* of the Reform Club, and which have been followed at the Carlton and other clubs in Pall-mall. Indeed, this, or something akin to it, ought to have been the official illumination. Individuals might have been left to their tedious and monotonous, rather than harmonious, reiteration of initial letters, had the long line of the streets, if not of the buildings, throughout the enormous expanse of London, been indicated by lines of light. The simple expedient, of which an example

was set at the Bank, of crowning every common gas standard in the metropolis and its suburbs with an open coronet or radiating star of gas, would have produced an incalculable effect.

And not only as regards the artistic results, but in significance also, the decorations were a failure. Allegory and sentiment, we suppose, are not in our English line; but there was scarcely anything to specialize the occasion. Not one decoration in fifty connected itself with the Peace; and where anything allusive was ventured upon, it was of the most fusty order of sentiment. Peace scantily clothed—symbolical, perhaps, of a wardrobe diminished by the Income-tax—the British Lion, with that mumping expression which might befit the noble quadruped when ruminating over M. DE BAZANCOURT'S pamphlet—and two or three atrocious caricatures of the QUEEN—are all that we observed in this line. The Burlington Arcade deserves an exceptional commendation; but, generally, every deviation from the conventional V. A.'s took the practical form of a tradesman's advertisement. The insurance offices, among which competition seems to be particularly keen, showed an especial predilection for the advertisement form of illumination. A tobacconist near Temple-bar, in a transparency, parodied with some point LANDSEER'S Peace and War, by displaying the double aspect of smoke in its military and social scenes; while a publican near Mile-end, with an eye to the main chance, and with commendable powers of alliteration, saluted in gigantic characters, "Peace, Prosperity, and Plenty—of Pure Porter." Among the most practical attempts at this combination, was a transparency devised by some illustrious cimicide in Marylebone, who, as HER MAJESTY'S bug destroyer, threatened destruction to "the domestic enemies of Peace." We may ask, was it stupidity, or an inspiration from the *Journal du Nord*, that instigated one Russianizing illuminator to combine the consecrated initials into the significant N. E. V. A.?

As to the fireworks, judging from the Hyde Park display, we must pronounce their exhibition to have been tedious and tiresome in the extreme. The programme exhibited a fine variety of mysterious "Saxon-wheels and tourbillons," which might possess interest to those skilled in a delicate discrimination of pyrotechnics, but which, like the poor lunatic's porridge, had, to the unskilled spectator, a monotonous flavour of water-gruel. We did not detect the promised concerted pieces, exhibiting sundry allegorical and sentimental lessons suitable to the occasion; but perhaps our imagination was dull. In fact, as regards this part of the affair, some blunder occurred, at least in Hyde Park. The grand catastrophe was unexpectedly and inconveniently interpolated in the action of the play; and, consequently, the whole plot melted off, rather than concluded. Is it a specimen of the habitual accuracy of the *Times*, that its reporter describes—here, as elsewhere—the thing that was in the language of the thing that ought to have been? Certainly, the magnificent *finale* of 10,000 rockets is only due to the poetical imagination of the "Leading Journal." Somehow, we suspect that the Chinese would have managed the whole thing better than BOXER. But the moral aspect of the day's rejoicing was, as usual, finer than its material success; and we cannot allow the admirable conduct of the vast crowds that everywhere thronged our thoroughfares to pass without our cordial tribute of well-merited applause.

ENGLISH COMMERCE AND FRENCH CREDIT.

THE theory of Capital, Currency, and Trade, is one of the most colourless of studies. Those who, for various reasons, have wished to depreciate political economy, have given it the nickname of the "dismal science;" but criticisms which may be just when directed against Scotch or English dulness, are altogether inapplicable to French ingenuity. The great nation which prides itself on universal scepticism is, of all others, most faithful to long-established traditions in commercial questions. In England, it is thought that a trading operation is for the most part advantageous both to the buyer and to the seller; and we regard the advantage of the transaction as altogether economical and material, while, in a moral point of view, it is generally neutral. The imagination of Frenchmen, on the other hand, invests the merchant and the manufacturer with the most various attributes. For half a century, it has been an accepted doctrine that English trade is injurious and oppressive to foreigners in direct proportion to its prosperity and success; but *nos*

fabricants, nos négociants, notre commerce, are supposed to be not less beneficial in their tendencies than disinterested and patriotic in their objects.

The *Assemblée Nationale*, representing the BOURBON-ORLEANS FUSION, follows out another respectable French tradition, by the cultivation of that unremitting hostility to England which conventionally belongs to the Opposition for the time being. The Republican *National* in the days of LOUIS-PHILIPPE adopted the same tone of animosity which at present characterises the Fusionist organ; but when M. MARRAST and his coadjutors found themselves in power, they gave the most satisfactory proofs that their invectives against a foreign rival had only been intended to injure the Government at home. If M. GUIZOT'S friends ever return to the surface of affairs, the renewal of the cordial understanding of 1843 will probably be one of their primary objects; but in the meantime, the *Assemblée* naturally denounces the sympathy of England for Italy, on the ground that it is selfish as well as revolutionary and malignant. In this country, it has not been observed that the mercantile classes have been peculiarly warm in their aspirations for Italian freedom; and those who take the deepest interest in the mitigation of Papal and Neapolitan despotism have in few instances studied the details of tariffs or price-currents. It is said, however, that bystanders see most of the game, and it has now been discovered that our object in remonstrating against misgovernment in Italy is only to substitute a more oppressive tyranny for existing evils.

According to the *Assemblée Nationale*, the temporal government of the POPE is only unpopular in England because it protects Central Italy against the encroachments of commercial intruders. The Holy Father alone stands between his people and 'the avid malignity' of London and Liverpool merchants. In a certain sense, the charge is not without a trace of meaning. An administration which keeps the people in beggary and ignorance does effectually protect them from those who might furnish them with luxuries and comforts in return for their surplus produce; and the merchants of London and Liverpool, if they have ever thought on the subject, may perhaps have assumed that a prosperous country would have more to sell than a poor and ill-governed one, and greater means of buying. But their avid malignity is rather directed to America, to Australia, to India, and to China, than to the petty States of Southern Europe. If the inhabitants of the Legations wish to exchange more oil and silk for a larger stock of cotton prints and Sheffield goods, there will be no difficulty in satisfying their wants; but unless shirts and knives and forks were thrust upon them at the point of the bayonet, it is difficult to understand the tyranny of tradesmen who merely open their shops to all comers. Even the Parisian journalist must know that English commerce has long ceased to claim or to desire exclusive privileges; but NAPOLEON I. denounced his enemies as commercial tyrants, and public opinion in France is not rapid in throwing off any impression which it may once have received.

French writers of the most opposite schools have co-operated in producing the belief that English trade is injurious to foreigners. THIERS, and other fanatical admirers of the Imperial system, always maintain the old opinion that exports alone are profitable to a nation—or in other words, that the advantage of a bargain belongs exclusively to the vendor; and LOUIS BLANC long since rejoiced in the approaching decay of a Power which he regarded as founded on the commercial despotism of the world. It seldom occurs to French theorists that the same oppression is practised, without the smallest check, on all parts of the British dominions. The avid malignity of Staffordshire imposes its crockery on every household in England and in the colonies; and no frontier line of customs secures Yorkshire against the irruption of Lancashire cotton, although it may retaliate in woollen and in cutlery. Free Australia, free Canada, and even independent America, tamely submit to that cruel usurpation which the Holy See still miraculously averts from Rome. As, however, profit of 15 or 20 per cent. is sufficient to stimulate avidity, the malignant gratification which may accompany a gainful transaction is at least a superfluous temptation.

If English trade is immoral and pernicious, French speculation is, we are assured, not only advantageous, but graceful and meritorious. A few days since, a long advertisement in the London papers contained the Report presented by the Directors of the *Crédit Mobilier* to their shareholders. There has seldom been a better opportunity of contrasting the

foreign commercial puff with our own corresponding domestic manufacture. The *Crédit Mobilier* is a sort of joint-stock ROTHSCHILD on a limited scale. Observing that capitalists at large realized great profits by employing their funds successively in enterprises of various kinds, the projectors hit upon the clever scheme of carrying out similar speculations by means of associated capital. The success of the undertaking will depend partly upon good fortune, but principally on the skill and integrity of the managers. The money trade is perhaps more profitable, as well as more hazardous, than any other, when it is carried beyond the regular business of banking. State loans, railway concessions, and contracts for public works, reward the sagacity and the boldness of those capitalists who manage to deal with them on advantageous terms. For all that appears, the *Crédit Mobilier* may be a highly legitimate enterprise, and the dividend which it returns ought to be proportioned to the risk which it involves. The simplicity of public opinion in France is curiously illustrated by the prevalent belief that M. PEREIRE and his colleagues have devised some striking commercial novelty. The great money-owners of Europe have, however, long been employed in operations precisely similar to those which are so pompously enumerated in the Report of the Directors; and the recent loans in England have, in every instance, been taken by a single firm.

In this country, a commercial prospectus or puff is generally confined to an exposition of the pecuniary benefits of the undertaking which is recommended to public notice. It is happily unnecessary to intersperse financial statements with adulatory homage to the Government, and an appeal to patriotic motives would at once produce an unfavourable impression in the share market. The directors of the *Crédit Mobilier*, however, probably understand the interests of their constituents, when they bear testimony, on every possible occasion, to the wisdom of the august personage who regulates the financial as well as the political fortunes of France. An English Board would be thought, with reason, to have betrayed its trust by making an unprofitable contract from any consideration of public advantage; but M. PEREIRE boasts, with equal confidence, of a 40 per cent. dividend, and of a subscription to the war loan which returns a profit of only 2000*l.* The maintenance of public credit is, as he observes, important to the Association; and public credit may imply credit with those who represent the public. Possibly, however, the enormous dividend would be still more attractive on the Bourse, especially if it had been payable, and were actually paid; but it seems that there are objections to the realization of certain securities, and that it is deemed expedient to capitalize a portion of the profits which have been obtained. It remains to be seen whether such an operation will make things pleasant to the shareholders.

The oddest part of the Report consists in a fervid appeal to the sentimental interest which is supposed to attach to the operations of the Company. The advertisement in the London newspapers must have been inserted in the hope of attracting English purchasers for the shares; but it seems that French credit and capital possess some peculiar and mysterious attributes which our countrymen can scarcely be expected to appreciate. The funds of the *Crédit Mobilier* have, we learn, been partly invested in Austrian railways, while similar negotiations are in progress with the Government of Spain; and the directors ascribe the alleged success of these operations in part to "the sympathy inspired by the French character." It would be a pity to destroy so marked an element of success by the introduction of English capital with its repulsive insular owners. The extension of the speculation to Spain has, in M. PEREIRE'S eloquent language, been hailed by the press of Madrid in the words of LOUIS XIV.—"The Pyrenees have ceased to exist;" but it may be doubted whether any national preference is indicated by the open hands of Spanish financiers. English capitalists have contrived to dispose, in the same quarter, of much larger sums than those which any joint-stock company in France can collect; and, but for the national want of rhetorical aptitude, we also might have proclaimed that the Bay of Biscay had ceased to exist. The sympathy inspired by the English character was sufficient to induce the Spaniards to borrow, and it will hereafter appear whether the sympathy inspired by the French character will induce them to pay.

The present rage for speculation in France will tend perhaps, in its results, to diffuse sounder notions on economical subjects. The vague belief in the omnipotence of credit will soon be dissipated by experience; and it will also be

found that animated stock-jobbing has but little connexion with commercial enterprise. There is no doubt that the country possesses great undeveloped resources, and we are glad to believe that the Government is not disinclined to a more liberal and rational mercantile system. If the intercourse between the opposite sides of the Channel should increase, English producers and consumers will alike be indisposed to censure the "avild malignity" of their neighbours.

WHAT IS A CONSERVATIVE?

IF the Carlton Club wishes to claim exemption from public criticism, it must abstain from intervention in public affairs. We are told that a Club is a private circle, and is, therefore, entitled to immunity from discussion by the press. But this assertion is only an instance of the fallacy which lurks in general terms. The Jacobin Club in Paris had no claim to be regarded as a domestic reunion, and the proceedings of its members were a fair subject of animadversion. The relations between a man and his grocer may be sacred and inviolable, as long as they are confined to mixed pickles and sugar; but when they principally relate to the disposal of the grocer's vote, the matter becomes one in which the constituency may fairly interest itself. If the Carlton Club proposed to exclude all members who are not baronets, or who weigh less than fourteen stone, or who have been twice convicted of reading and writing, or of having poisoned a fox, or of any other crime equally atrocious in the eyes of a country gentleman, we should at once admit that the affair was no business of ours, except as an illustration of the manners and customs of the squires in the nineteenth century. But when a body of gentlemen associate themselves together for the avowed object of influencing public affairs by operating both on Parliament and on the constituencies, it is simply absurd to assert that the nation has no right to interest itself in their proceedings. The very basis of the movement lately attempted in the Carlton is the assumption that the Club is, or ought to be made, the true representative of a distinct political party. The Club is to react on the party quite as much as the party on the Club; and if the two, therefore, are to be treated as identical in their principles and conduct, it cannot be denied that we have a right to inquire into the aims and objects of the one, unless our title to discuss the other be also disputed. It is idle, therefore, for the Club to demur to the jurisdiction of public opinion, unless it is prepared to abandon its political pretensions.

In one sense, the late proceedings of certain members of that association sufficiently establish the identity of its character with what claims to be called the Conservative party. We find the same incoherence of ideas, disunion of counsels, violence of language, and impotence of action, which distinguish the political section of which Lord DERBY and Mr. DISRAELI are the nominal leaders. The result of Saturday's debate in Pall Mall is much the same as that which attends the gatherings in St. James's Square, or the divisions in the lobby at Westminster. One man wants to do this, and another thinks it better to do that—till at last the leaders step forward, and on the whole, recommend the "Conservative party" to do nothing.

We are not disposed to disparage the value of political or party combinations. The experience of the last ten years has not, we imagine, done much to make the public enamoured of armed neutrality in politics. We have a much better chance of peace when we can bring Parliamentary strife to the issue of a pitched battle between regular armies, than when the quarrel is left to be fought out by "each man for his own hand, as HARRY WYND fought." If, therefore, the Carlton Club had some defined principle of organization by which it could regulate its admissions and exclusions, we are not sure that we should greatly object to that policy of extermination by which it seeks to enforce conformity. But we must be excused for suggesting that, though it may be perfectly correct to burn heretics, it is essential that the Inquisition itself should have some general idea of what constitutes orthodoxy. On personal grounds, a Club may of course object to any man peremptorily, and without showing cause; but if it claims a political basis, it is impossible to exclude a member without alleging some distinction between his opinions and those of the body at large. Mr. DISRAELI once raised the very pertinent question—"What is it that Conservatism purposes to conserve?" The sphinx has subsequently become a leader of Conservatism, but we have never been able to discover that he has given a solution of his own riddle. We are as much at a loss as ever to discover

the symbol of Conservative faith, and the shibboleth which is the test of its communion.

Is the Carlton Club, as the organ of the Conservative party, formed for the promotion of some particular principle, or is it only a confederation for the introduction into office of particular men? View it either way, it is equally difficult to reconcile the history of its career with the theory of its constitution. Consider the Club in the year 1844—any Tory squire in those days would have told us that the object of the Carlton was to maintain the Corn Laws and to support the Government of SIR ROBERT PEEL. When that statesman and his followers changed their views on the subject of Protection, it was no doubt competent to the Carlton and to the party to abandon their leaders and stick to their principles. But the singular course which they actually adopted was to throw overboard both—so that their principles are no longer unchanged, any more than their leaders. The most eager supporters of LORD DERBY's Government divided against him on the question whether Protection should be finally abandoned; yet the Carlton Club still continued to cherish both the fifty-three just men who had not bowed the knee to Free-Trade, and also the 280 renegades who had followed after the gainsaying of PEEL. Why did not the "Cannon Balls" turn out MR. DISRAELI in 1852? Or, if he was the strongest, why did not MR. DISRAELI turn out the "Cannon Balls?"

If the Carlton Club is to exclude members who do not sympathise in the principles which it professes to promote, we may at least ask to know what those principles are. The question of the War is disposed of—else we should have been curious to learn the opinion of the Carlton on the policy of MR. DISRAELI and the *Press*. Peace, however, has returned, and domestic questions have resumed their former ascendancy. Is it, then, with a view to the safe keeping of the Church, and to defend the pale of the Constitution from the intrusion of Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, that the Carlton Club is invited to place the reins of Government in the hands of the member for Bucks? Is LORD STANLEY or MR. WALPOLE the exponent of Conservative opinions on the question of Church-rates? If we turn to the subject of Education, we inquire, is SIR J. PAKINGTON to be allowed to associate with MR. HENLEY and the volunteers? Parliamentary Reform is, for the moment, hardly a practical question; but will either of the leaders of the Conservative party rise in his place, and say that he is prepared to refuse all change in our representative system? If we are to be told that, without specifying any particular principles on which the government of the country is to be conducted, the object of the Carlton Club is to place LORD DERBY in office, we can only ask, when was this principle of combination established, and how long is it to last? Long before the "treason" of SIR ROBERT PEEL, the Club contained many members who lost no opportunity of embarrassing his Administration and thwarting his policy; and it is difficult to see on what principle LORD DERBY can hope to enjoy the advantage of a more complete party subordination.

But is it to the opposition or the neutrality of the "Peelites" that the present weakness of the Conservatives is due? Are the orthodox majority of the party so very zealous and unanimous in their pursuit of that great end of their existence—the revival of a Derbyite Administration? When LORD DERBY's Government was terminated by the division on the Budget, the minority in which he found himself only numbered nineteen. Four years later, in the very same Parliament, he tries his strength in a critical division on a motion framed by the Opposition Cabinet, and he finds that his minority has grown to one hundred and twenty-seven. Is this the work of the Peelites? And, if not, are those lukewarm supporters—those half-concealed traitors—who habitually absent themselves on the great "Conservative" motions, to be tolerated in a Club whose object is to place LORD DERBY in power? The truth is, it is hopeless for the Carlton Club to enforce discipline and conformity among its members while the party itself is in a state of anarchy and rebellion. Until they can devise some principle of union and cohesion, they have no choice, whether in Westminster or in Pall-mall, but to endeavour to hide the dissensions and mutual distrust by which they are distracted. For the present, at least, the only possible policy of the Conservatives is a policy of the "previous question"—a policy singularly suited to the temper of the leaders to whom its fortunes are confided—men who are "willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike"—but very little adapted to consolidate a great party, or to prepare the way for a strong Government.

DIRT AND DIGNITY.

SCAVENGING is dirty work at the best, and London is not the cleanest of cities. Sewers, and sumps, and reservoirs of filth are unsavoury things to contemplate, though they form an indispensable part of the machinery on which the health of our huge metropolitan population depends. But good sound effective work, even when spent on the basest subject, will bring a harvest of credit to those who perform it; and when the Metropolitan Board of Works shall have relieved our river of its abominations, it will have no small claim upon our gratitude. Meanwhile, it would do wisely not to make too large a demand on the public reverence. The dignity of labour is a favourite bit of slang in these utilitarian days; but the dogma will not always bear a practical illustration. A grimy bare-armed blacksmith may suggest some notion of the kind, and, in the abstract, we may even contemplate with admiration the cleansing process which devolves on MR. THWAITES and his colleagues; but to associate the idea of dignity with a concrete dustman, or even with a Board of superintending scavengers, would be too much for the most determined theorist on the subject. Human nature recoils from the thought; and we fear that these highly useful functionaries must be content to toil at their thankless tasks without expecting to reap an immediate harvest of glorification. And yet there is one way in which even our subterranean purifiers may make a name for themselves. Let them labour on till they have done some heroic work, and they may win their way to honour, though the road to it should lie through a sewer. HERCULES earned a seat among the gods as much by the cleansing of a stable as by any of his more warlike achievements; and we do not see why the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works should not one day stand upon a pedestal as the man who had restored the sullied purity of Old Thames.

To do justice to the concentrated vestry that holds its sittings at Guildhall, it shows a laudable ambition to be great; but we fear it has forgotten that it must do its work before it aims at dignity. Work may be worship, as THOMAS CARLYLE tells us—but the Metropolitan Board seems to think that, by making itself worshipped, it can dispense with work. These worthy citizens and suburbanians have now been meeting weekly for something like six months, and it is about time to inquire what they have been doing. So far as we can discover, the effective result of their labours is this. They have organized themselves and arranged their mode of procedure with a due regard to Parliamentary usage. They have settled divers points of precedence and etiquette. They have had sundry animated debates on the importance of their functions, and have prescribed the formalities of respect with which the representations of local vestries are to be introduced into their august presence. Besides this, they have referred a multitude of pressing matters to committees and sub-committees of their body; but they have not as yet done, or so much as begun, any part of the real work for the sake of which they were called into existence.

Instead of the business-like application which was expected from them, their meetings have displayed nothing but a childish assumption of official dignity. Nearly the first piece of business which devolved upon them was the devising of a corporate seal. The subject was approached with becoming reverence, and a Committee was duly appointed to invent an appropriate device. Nothing less than heraldic emblazonment would beseem the honour of the Board; and as the QUEEN'S Great Seal contains the arms of the three united kingdoms, so it was resolved that the signet by which the Board should authorize a rate or approve a sewer must unite the arms of the several counties included within its dominions. Artists were invited to compose the design, when, to the dismay of the Board, it was discovered that some of the plebeian counties had no heraldic bearings to contribute to the intended composition. How the difficulty was at last got over we do not know, but the spirit which dictated this first absurdity was not to be quelled by one discomfiture. The incident of the great seal is in fact the key to their whole proceedings. The dignity of the Board, the jurisdiction of the Board, the privileges of the Board and the rights of its honourable members, have been zealously discussed and solemnly maintained. Members of the Board have not yet been authorized to write M.B. after their names; but from the way in which they have aped the forms of Parliament, we should not be surprised to hear that a motion to that effect had been carried by acclamation. And all this time nothing, or next to nothing, has been done

The proceedings at the last reported meeting will show whether we have caricatured the Guildhall vestry. One of the items of business related to the much-vexed question of Sir THOMAS WILSON and the enclosure of Hampstead Heath. On a former occasion, a majority of the Board had refused to take the matter into consideration. Certain honourable members thereupon proceeded to get up a little out-of-door agitation, just as Mr. BRIGHT, when defeated in the House of Commons, might have summoned a Peace meeting in Manchester—or just as Mr. DISRAELI used to collect his farming friends to denounce free trade. Accordingly, St. Pancras met, and being partial to Sunday jaunts to the pleasant heath, resolved to memorialize the Board to consider the propriety of purchasing it for a metropolitan playground. At the other end of the metropolis, Newington mustered its forces to protest against the suggested extravagance. The rival petitions were transmitted to the parochial delegates, and the business before the Board was to consider the propriety of receiving the documents, just as the House of Commons had received some scores of petitions on the same subject. An animated and characteristic debate followed. An honourable member for a northern parish moved that the papers be received. Mr. TAYLOR opposed the motion in a sarcastic speech. He would consent that the documents should lie on the table, or under the table (great sensation); but the resolution of St. Pancras had expressed disapproval of the Board. These individuals must be taught to approach the Board as their masters—in a respectful manner. There was Newington, now, quite respectful and sensible—what were St. Pancras and Marylebone, that they should suppose that they concentrated the wisdom of the Metropolis? This burst of eloquence having been received with cries of “Hear, hear,” the honourable member took a bolder flight, and indulged in playful remarks about hole-and-corner meetings. Suddenly, he remembered that he was trenching on the privileges of his colleagues by attacking the two great constituent bodies in the absence of their representatives. It was beautiful to see how the fiery indignation of the orator was subdued by the sense of the courtesy due to the members for Marylebone and Pancras. The parishes were nothing—mere aggregates of disrespectful individuals—but the feelings of honourable members were privileged, and Mr. TAYLOR gracefully sat down, after moving his amendment. But what was to be done? how was the Board to vindicate its dignity? More speeches were made, without bringing the matter nearer to a conclusion. At last the President suggested a course by which the Board might evade the difficulty. There was urgent business to be attended to. Why should not the subject be dropped? But this was out of the question. Drop the dignity of the Board? To that Mr. D'IFFANGER would never consent. He had the greatest deference for the PRESIDENT; but the course sketched out by the chair would let the bane go forth without the antidote. Mr. SAVAGE followed on the same side—he could not allow the imputations of Mr. TAYLOR to remain unanswered for a whole week. Again the PRESIDENT entreated that the discussion should be stopped; but parochial honour forbade that Mr. TAYLOR's reflections on the great constituencies should remain without retraction or apology.

At last, the Parliamentary mind of Mr. D'IFFANGER solved the difficulty by frankly offering to make peace if Mr. TAYLOR would only withdraw the words “under the table.” Mr. TAYLOR, with equal courtesy, consented, and the Board was allowed to proceed to the next order of the day. This was a communication from the Board of Health, referring to instances of infection caused by the use of cabs for the conveyance of hospital patients, and requesting to know whether the Metropolitan Board would undertake the regulation of special vehicles for hospital purposes, if the necessary powers were inserted in an Act which the Board of Health were about to apply for. The first thing to be considered was, whether the letter was a respectful one. The President thought it was, and the Board concurred. It was accordingly taken into consideration, when the Board resolved that it was so much occupied with pressing business that it could not undertake the additional duty. Who can fail to admire the conscientious scruples which forbid the honourable members for all London to spend, even on an important duty, the time which they are abundantly able to bestow on the smallest points of form? Only one thing more is needful to save them from becoming utterly ridiculous—and that is, that, in accordance with their President's advice, they should drop their dignity and proceed to business.

THE TRIAL OF WILLIAM PALMER.

WE have elsewhere adverted to the moral and social bearings of Palmer's case, but the enormous length of the proceedings may make some account of the evidence by which the charge was established acceptable to our readers. We doubt whether a clearer case was ever presented to a jury. It was, indeed, so overwhelming that unless the prisoner's position in society, his medical skill, his connexion with the turf, and the horrible character of the other accusations against him had produced an unparalleled excitement—and unless the circumstances of his family had enabled him to bring into court medical witnesses from all parts of the country—the case would have presented few features of general interest. In a legal point of view, it is otherwise. A more remarkable trial, or one more calculated to raise the character of the English administration of criminal justice, has, we think, rarely occurred. We do not refer so much to the extraordinary ability displayed by the Attorney-General—whose reply was, in the opinion of those best entitled to judge, one of the noblest combinations of logic and rhetoric to which the present generation has listened—nor to the almost superhuman vigour of the Judge who, at an age when most men have outlived their intellects, presided over the trial for twelve days, and summed up the evidence for upwards of twelve hours, without hesitation, without confusion, and without forgetting a single point. We refer rather to the proof which the proceedings have afforded of the soundness of the English rules of evidence. On the one hand, they admitted proof of all the circumstances necessary to establish the prisoner's guilt in the most conclusive manner; and, on the other, they excluded from the consideration of the jury everything which could prejudice them against a man who was accused of no less than three murders, and suspected of a great number of forgeries and other frauds. It may be doubted whether any other system of jurisprudence would have secured for the prisoner a perfectly impartial consideration of the question whether he did or did not murder Cook, without in any way warping the inquiry by the questions whether he murdered Ann Palmer or Walter Palmer, or whether he forged the acceptance of his mother.

The proof that Palmer murdered Cook depends on three propositions:—1. That he (Palmer) had a strong motive to do so; 2. That the symptoms of Cook's death were consistent with the hypothesis that it was caused by strychnia; 3. That the circumstances which preceded, attended, and followed it leave no reasonable doubt that Palmer did, in fact, administer strychnia to him.

In our judgment, each of these propositions was irresistibly supported by the evidence. That Palmer was in desperate circumstances is proved by the fact, that on the 12th November he gave a cheque for 1000*l.*, dated on the 28th November, in payment of a forged acceptance of his mother's, upon which he had raised money, and on which, if he was unable to take it up before the 12th of December, he was certain to be sued. Shortly after he gave this cheque, his balance at his banker's was only 9*l.* 6*s.* At the same time, the money-lender, Pratt, was pressing him for payment upon other forged acceptances of his mother's; whilst a third creditor, Wright, had a bill of sale over the whole of his property, as a collateral security to a third set of acceptances—some of them forged—amounting altogether to upwards of 10,000*l.* As Pratt and Wright held collateral securities, Palmer's most pressing liability was the post-dated cheque for 1000*l.*, which he had given to Espin, and for this it was absolutely necessary that he should, if possible, provide funds at once. Cook had about his person, soon after Shrewsbury races, 700*l.* or 800*l.* in notes; and he was also entitled to receive various bets at Tattersall's on the following Monday, together with the stakes won by his horse, “Polestar.” The possession of this money might possibly not only have relieved Palmer's immediate necessities, but have enabled him to free himself altogether from a considerable part of them, in the event of his ultimately succeeding in enforcing his claim against the Prince of Wales Insurance Office for 13,000*l.* Nor must it be forgotten that he was exposed, not only to civil but also to criminal consequences, by having dealt with acceptances which he had certainly uttered knowing them to be forged, whether he was himself the original forger or not. These considerations establish, beyond all doubt, the proposition that towards the middle of November, Palmer was in the most urgent want of 1000*l.* But it was contended, on the part of the prisoner, that it was not his interest to obtain that money by murdering Cook, inasmuch as Cook was the only person from whom he had any chance of obtaining assistance, and as Cook's death would render him exclusively liable to Pratt for a bill of 500*l.*, of which he was the drawer and Cook the acceptor. This was, however, disposed of by the consideration that Cook had no property left except his race-horses, which were already pledged to Pratt for 500*l.*, and his winnings on the Shrewsbury races; and that, if Palmer contrived to possess himself of them, he would get all that Cook could, and much more than it was at all probable that he would, give him. It was no doubt true that, by murdering Cook, he would substitute the responsibility of an unsympathetic executor for that of an associate; but, on the other hand, he would enable himself to take up the 500*l.* bill, and to provide funds to meet the cheque which he had given to Espin. Such was the motive suggested for Cook's murder. As Lord Campbell well observed, its existence was a more important question than its adequacy. If any motive will induce a man to commit murder, its weight will depend entirely on the wickedness of the man.

The question as to the nature of the disease of which Cook died is one of greater delicacy, and was discussed at such length that we doubt whether most of those who read the evidence did not lose sight of the main point in the infinite mass of detail. That Cook died of some form of tetanus seems to be admitted on all hands. Some of the witnesses attempted to refer his symptoms to epilepsy; but they failed to mention any case in which epilepsy had been attended with a perfect retention of consciousness. The rigidity of the muscles, the locking of the jaws, the arching of the body, the convulsive spasms, and the appearance of the corpse, were all indicative of tetanus, and were not consistent with any other form of disease. Now, tetanus is of three kinds—traumatic, or that which results from wounds—idiopathic, or that which results from natural causes other than wounds—and the tetanus of strychnia. Tetanus in all its forms is rare. Traumatic tetanus is the commonest. Idiopathic tetanus is almost unknown in this country, and of that which is produced by strychnia, not more than fifteen or twenty cases have occurred since the discovery of the poison. That Cook did not die of traumatic tetanus seems to be conclusively proved by the circumstance that he had no wounds on his body to account for it. Some of the medical witnesses for the defence attempted to set up a theory that such a result might have ensued upon certain ulcers in his throat; but the physician who attended him proved that those ulcers were not attributable to the disease to which those who maintained this hypothesis had referred them; and they were unable to mention a single case in which ulcers produced by that disease had caused traumatic tetanus. Besides, the symptoms of traumatic tetanus differ most materially from those which occurred in Cook's case. It is a disease which lasts, not for hours but for days, and which may occasionally relax its symptoms, but never entirely remits them until the patient either dies or recovers. This is also true of idiopathic tetanus, which is, however, so rare in this country, that of the eminent surgeons and physicians called on the part of the prosecution, Dr. Todd had seen only two cases, and Mr. Daniel one, whilst Sir Benjamin Brodie, Mr. Curling, and Mr. Solly had never seen any. Idiopathic tetanus, moreover, does not appear without some exciting cause; and no such exciting cause could be found, upon a post-mortem examination, in Cook's body.

Traumatic and idiopathic tetanus being both out of the question, no known cause of death remained, except the tetanus of strychnia, and the symptoms corresponded so closely with those which this poison produces, both in the human subject and in other animals, that Sir Benjamin Brodie and Doctor Todd distinctly swore to their conviction that the symptoms described were attributable to strychnia, whilst Mr. Daniel and Mr. Solly swore that they were not attributable to any known disease. The evidence for the Crown would therefore seem to go a long way to prove that Cook died of the poison of strychnia; and what the Crown left unproved, the medical evidence for the prisoner unquestionably supplied. The defence on this point turned upon two propositions:—First, that the deceased did not die of strychnia, because, if he had, it would have been discovered in his body; and secondly, that he did die of some other disease. The first proposition was supported by the evidence of Mr. Nunneley, Mr. Letheby, and Mr. Herapath, who swore that they had discovered strychnia, upon various occasions, and in very minute quantities, in the dead bodies of men and animals; but their testimony was met by the remark, that they did not examine Cook's body. The question was not whether the non-discovery of strychnia proved its absence, but whether its non-discovery by Dr. Taylor and Dr. Rees proved its absence; and as these gentlemen swore that they applied to the bodies of animals which they had themselves poisoned by strychnia the same tests which they applied to Cook's body, and with the same results, it might well be that there might be strychnia in Cook's body, which they were unable to find. If the prisoner's counsel had succeeded in proving all that they attempted to prove, they would only have shown that Messrs. Letheby and Herapath were better chemists than Dr. Taylor and Dr. Rees. We do not, however, think that they established even this; for they only succeeded in extracting strychnia in cases in which death had been caused by a large dose, and Dr. Taylor and Dr. Rees only failed in extracting it where death had been caused by a small dose. The last-mentioned gentlemen found strychnine in rabbits which had been put to death by doses of a grain or upwards; but they could not extract it from those which had been killed by doses of half a grain, and it did not appear that the witnesses for the defence attempted to do so. The theory advanced by Dr. Taylor renders this result quite intelligible. His view, as well as that of many other medical men, is that strychnia acts by absorption—that it is taken up from the stomach by the absorbents; that it passes thence into the blood and subsequently into the tissues—and that, at some unknown point in its progress through the body, it causes death. Hence, only so much as is not absorbed would be found in the stomach; but if only a minimum dose is administered, the whole would be absorbed, and none would remain in the stomach. According to the same theory, it would be totally uncertain whether any of the poison would be found after death in the blood, inasmuch as it might have passed before death into the tissues. It is, besides, an open question whether strychnia does not altogether dissolve, and therefore cease to exist as strychnia, when it reaches the blood. When we add, that in Cook's case the stomach would seem to have been unskil-

fully handled, and that it was in a most unfavourable state for analysis when it reached Dr. Taylor, we shall probably attach little importance to the fact that no strychnia was found.

The proof of the second proposition maintained by the defence—namely, that Cook died of some other disease than the tetanus of strychnine—failed entirely; and, indeed, the medical witnesses for the defence contributed as much as those for the prosecution to establish the prisoner's guilt. They suggested various diseases as the possible cause of Cook's death—for example, general convulsions, arachnitis, epileptic convulsions with tetanic complications, and angina pectoris. But though they differed thus widely in this respect, they were unanimous in admitting, under cross-examination, that the symptoms, at any rate, closely resembled those of strychnia. Some of them, as Mr. Partridge, Mr. Wrightson, and Mr. Robinson, admitted this with perfect candour and fairness—others, and more particularly Mr. Macdonald, fought against the conclusion most vehemently. The last-mentioned witness went so far as to say that he believed there was inflammation of the stomach—though several of the doctors who made the examination looked for it and did not see it—and that he believed Dr. Bamford (a man of eighty) was right in maintaining, in opposition to the other medical men, that the brain was congested. It was impossible not to see that a man who would go such lengths to support a hypothesis was acting, not as a witness, but as an advocate. Mr. Herapath also was forced to admit that he had said that Cook's case was a case of strychnia, but that Dr. Taylor did not know how to find it. This impression, he said, he got from the newspapers; but he was unable to show that what he had read in the newspapers materially differed from what he heard in Court.

The evidence, therefore, upon this head stands thus:—Several medical men of the highest eminence swear positively that they believe the symptoms to have been produced by strychnia; whilst other members of the same profession agree in admitting their resemblance to the symptoms of strychnia, but assign other diseases as their more probable cause—hardly any two precisely agreeing as to the cause to be so assigned. If, in ordinary life, three eminent doctors declared a certain disease to be small-pox, and if four others respectively said, it is either small-pox or A—it is either small-pox or B—it is either small-pox or C—it is either small-pox or D—would anyone doubt that it was small-pox? When the Athenian officers all put their own names first, and the name of Themistocles second in the list of honour, no one doubted who was really the best man.

The evidence may be said, therefore, to prove conclusively that the symptoms were, at any rate, consistent with strychnia; and it proves, with almost equal force, that they were inconsistent with any other known form of disease. This being so, there can be no question that Palmer's conduct before, during, and after Cook's death *might* be such as to leave no reasonable doubt that he had actually administered strychnine. That it *was* such, is, we think, proved by the following considerations. First, he incontestably bought six grains of the poison on the night of Cook's death, and there is strong evidence to show that he had bought three grains the night before. No contradiction or explanation was even offered respecting the six grains, except an idle and totally gratuitous suggestion about the possible poisoning of a dog; and no plausible reason was given for supposing that the witness who deposed to the purchase of the three grains had perjured himself. Strychnine is not a drug in general use, and it is impossible that so large a quantity as nine grains could be wanted for any lawful purpose which could not be proved to have existed. Secondly, there can be no doubt that Palmer administered antimony to Cook. Antimony was found in the dead man's body. He was constantly vomiting before his death, and yet neither emetics nor antimony had been prescribed for him. Palmer, on the other hand, was in constant attendance upon Cook, and he sent him, on one occasion, some broth which produced vomiting, not only in Cook, but also in Elizabeth Mills. Of these circumstances no explanation was offered. Thirdly, Palmer was in great pecuniary difficulty before Cook's illness, and Cook was in possession of 700*l.* or 1000*l.* After Cook's death none of that money could be found, but Palmer paid several large bills, and changed two bank notes for 50*l.* each. He also got a third person, Cheshire, the postmaster, to fill up—as he said, for Cook to sign—the body of a cheque for upwards of 300*l.* on Messrs. Weatherby, the racing agents, in his (Palmer's) favour. That cheque was sent up to Weatherbys—it was returned by them to Palmer—and it was not produced on the trial, though its production, if it were genuine, would have gone further to exonerate Palmer than any other evidence whatever. Moreover, Palmer attempted to induce Cheshire, after Cook's death, to witness a paper, purporting to be a memorandum of Cook's, admitting that certain bills of large amount had been accepted by Palmer for Cook's benefit solely. He also authorised a Mr. Herring to settle Cook's betting account, in the place of his usual agent, Fisher, and told him to pay to Padwick (the client of Espin, to whom Palmer had given the post-dated cheque) 350*l.* and 450*l.* to Pratt—thus disposing of the whole of Cook's winnings for his own purposes. Not one word did Mr. Serjeant Shee say, in his defence, of any of these transactions, though he professed himself ready to meet and refute the Attorney-General on every point of the case. They seem to us to prove to demonstration that Palmer had made a plot to murder his friend, and to obtain possession, not only of his cash, but also of the amounts due to

him as bets or stakes, and to apply the whole to the relief of his own innumerable.

After such overwhelming proof as this, it seems hardly necessary to advert to the other circumstances of the case; but, great or little, all lead to the same conclusion. The attempt to bribe the post-boy to upset the jar in which Cook's intestines were placed—the tampering with the coroner—the tampering with the postmaster—the officious interference which first aroused the suspicions of Mr. Stevens—the disappearance of the betting-book—and, above all, the false accounts given to Jones, and suggested to Bamford, of the nature of Cook's ailments, are small but weighty matters, which all point to the same conclusion. If, under such circumstances, the jury had considered that there was any reasonable doubt in the case, they would assuredly have been deficient in that courageous good sense which is absolutely essential to the efficiency of trial by jury.

Some of the incidents of the trial are interesting in a legal point of view. The proceedings convey to our mind the strongest proof of the propriety of the course adopted by English law, of submitting the testimony of scientific witnesses to the jury, as contrasted with the French system of giving to such evidence an all but conclusive character. The danger of our system is, of course, the encouragement of partisanship, by leading a medical witness to become, in fact, a medical counsel. But this trial has conclusively shown that the right of cross-examination—also peculiar, we believe, to English law—is the best possible means of exposing ignorance, presumption, or party spirit; whilst its inability to shake really wise and honest testimony is equally shown by the total failure on the part of the counsel for the prisoner to make the jury doubt or misunderstand the evidence of Dr. Taylor. That that gentleman may have shown some indiscretion in his conversations with persons connected with the newspaper press, and in his communication to the *Lancet*, must be admitted; but it is equally true that the scrutiny to which he was submitted entirely failed to shake his testimony, or to injure his high professional reputation. If Dr. Taylor had been, not a witness, but an officer of the Court pronouncing an opinion binding on the jury, there can be no doubt that the public would have been far less satisfied with the result than they are.

Another subject which requires notice is the declaration of Mr. Serjeant Shee that he believed in the innocence of the prisoner. We cannot protest too strongly against such conduct. We make no imputation against Mr. Serjeant Shee, and we do not doubt that he meant what he said; but we wish that he had considered before making the statement, that if he ever defends another case of the same kind, the absence of such a declaration can hardly fail to be remarked by the jury to the disadvantage of his client. It should always be borne in mind that the position which a barrister has to maintain, is, not that his client is innocent, but that it is not proved that he is guilty.

On the whole, we cannot but express the strongest satisfaction at the manner in which this case has been conducted. We have heard so much of law reform that we are rather apt to forget that the law of England has great excellences as well as great defects, and that, if English lawyers have much to learn, they have also much to teach. We do not think that any other country could show so excellent a specimen of perfect logic and freedom from all prejudice as this case has afforded.

PRUSSIA.

WE had occasion, not many weeks ago, to remind our readers that even that party in Prussia which has, during the recent struggle, shown itself most opposed to English views and interests, is now prepared, by a closer alliance with this country, to guard against dangers which seem to impend in the not very distant future. The ties which are likely soon to connect the Courts of Berlin and St. James's will naturally tend to facilitate this very desirable object; and as we cannot take too much pains to come to an accurate understanding of the circumstances of a country which is, ere long, to be knit so closely with our own, we propose to offer a few remarks on the present political condition and prospects of the great kingdom of North Germany.

There are three great parties in Prussia. First, we have the Reactionaries, who cling to the principles of the Holy Alliance, and consider that the mission of their country is to uphold the interests of Protestant Christianity in strict union with Austria and Russia—the one as representing the Catholic, the other, the ancient Eastern Church. All minor jealousies and dislikes are merged by these politicians in their extreme hatred of Liberalism, of the Revolution, and of France. Next, there are the Constitutionalists, who look to England as affording the best model of political institutions, and who hate Russia with a bitterness of which we, who know the insolence of the Czars only by report, have very little idea. They are accustomed to comment with no little bitterness on the behaviour of those Prussian officers who permitted themselves to be told by the Emperor Nicholas, when at Berlin, that they were the vanguard of his forces. They have often in their mouths the saying of Frederick the Great, that if Russia were once in Constantinople, she would ere long be in Königsberg; and they drink in with avidity every report of disaffection or disturbance within the dominions of the Czar. Russia, they say, is Prussia's most powerful neighbour. Their frontier is wide in extent and ill-defended—their population amounts to sixteen millions, while that of Russia is

four times as numerous. Their solicitude is increased when they remember that two-thirds of the territorial acquisitions of Russia since 1721 have been made towards the West, and that eighty years have pushed forward her frontier from Kiev and Smolensk to between East Prussia and Silesia. The pretended friendship of the Court of St. Petersburg is, they say, a mere mask. In the year 1756, the Empress Elizabeth proposed to partition Prussia, in conjunction with Austria and France. To say nothing of the very equivocal conduct of Russia in the several partitions of Poland, she threatened, in 1800, to declare war against the King of Prussia if he did not embroil himself with England. In 1805, the Emperor Alexander proposed to disregard the Prussian neutrality, and to march his troops across her territories into Moravia. Frederick William III., relying on the friendly promises of the Autocrat, refused the advantageous peace which Napoleon offered to him after the battle of Eylau: but Alexander, on the other hand, concluded the Treaty of Tilsit, in spite of his engagements to Prussia. In 1848, the Emperor Nicholas threatened to take possession of East Prussia as a material guarantee—in March, 1850, he repeated the same menace—and in 1853, he proposed to compensate France for any acquisition he might make in the East by allowing her a share of Prussia.

Not less bitterly opposed to Russia than these, but differing widely in its views of internal politics, is the Democratic party, which constitutes by far the most numerous section of the community, and embraces nearly the whole of the lower classes. If we were to take into account only those persons who are Republicans or Socialists from conviction, we should have before us, no doubt, a very considerable array; but what gives real importance to the democratic phalanx is that it comprehends the vast unreasoning masses of the Proletariat. The aimless excesses of 1848 showed how formidable these masses were, and how little they were either understood or controlled by their nominal leaders. It is a melancholy, but an undeniable fact, that the established religion in Prussia has still more signally failed in dealing with the poorer population of the towns than it has in this country. Over only a very insignificant section of the inhabitants of Berlin does it exercise any influence at all; and the well-meant, but singularly ill-directed efforts of the most zealous portion of the clergy are met with the derisive answer—"So, you want to make us stupid again." We do not, of course, overlook or depreciate the efforts of the "Inner Mission;" but its proceedings are not always very judicious. The tendency of the dominant party in the Church is to turn away from the contest with moral and social evil to sing psalms over the lately disinterred Confession of Augsburg. If, at the close of the War of Liberation, a Constitution had been granted, according to the royal promise, it is very probable that, long before this time, the people would have discovered that the real hardships of their condition are such as no political changes could remove, and that, the more political tranquillity is preserved, the more they would have to hope from increased intelligence and more extended sympathy in the higher ranks. Unfortunately, however, the late King chose another path—his successor too long followed him—and now the conviction has, there is much reason to fear, become very general, that the only way to prosperity lies through a change of institutions.

The policy of the Prussian Government during the late war has created a natural feeling of irritation in this country, and has led us to form very harsh judgments as to the character and views of the persons from whom that policy emanated. No one has suffered more from English indignation than Frederick William IV. It is, of course, impossible to claim for him a reputation for decision, or for that sagacity which sees intuitively which of several courses of conduct, for all of which much is to be said, is best fitted to accomplish a given end; but the circumstances in which he found himself in the spring of 1854 were far more complicated than is generally supposed. A large and very powerful party in his dominions openly espoused the cause of the Czar. His eastern frontier was weak—his relations with Austria were none of the best—his sister was Empress of Russia. Those provinces which would have had to bear the brunt of the war were wretchedly poor; and his own vacillation had turned the whole of the extreme Liberal party into enemies of himself and his house. He might at any moment need the assistance of Russia against an internal outbreak, or he might need her help against France, if France attempted to win the frontier of the Rhine. If he went to war with Russia, the war must be pushed to extremities. No neutralization of the Black Sea, or rearrangement of the Turkish frontier, could secure him against a terrible day of reckoning. The colonies must be utterly shattered and broken up, and he might well doubt whether England or France was prepared for this. Again, the old hatred of the French was strong amongst the people, and stronger still in the army. Nor had the Eastern question any direct interest for Prussia. "If our fatherland is in danger," his old captains would say to him, "we will gird on our swords with the greatest alacrity; but if we fight for the interests of foreign States, it will only be because your Majesty commands." As Frederick William IV. was born in 1795, his boyhood fell in the saddest time of Prussian history, and his youth saw the great resurrection of Germany and the struggle for liberation. Thus, all his earlier years were spent amidst wars and rumours of wars. Is it, then, surprising, that in his old age he should shrink from making his country the scene of calamities like those of 1806?

We know that against all this there were other and weighty considerations to be set. Had Frederick the Great been on the throne, he would have acted differently. Perhaps even the *gros bon sens* of Frederick William I. would have led him to adopt another policy; but we can well believe that the present king, with his wider range of vision, must have often felt himself in the position of the great Elector, when—harassed now by the Swedes, now by the Emperor—he said, “Neither David nor Solomon were ever in such sore straits as I.” While many considerations of policy inclined him to peace, the natural bent of his mind pointed in the same direction. He is, we believe, by no means ignorant of military science; but undoubtedly his proficiency in those arts which are essentially unwarlike is far more remarkable. To make Berlin the Munich or Florence of Northern Germany—to call out the genius of her rising artists—to touch the matter-of-fact civilization of the Baltic coast with something of the glow which civilization wears on the shores of the Mediterranean—to make the Protestantism of Prussia rather positive than negative, by re-kindling the spirit of the Church of the Catacombs and the Basilicas—to encourage science and to promote the revivification of ancient history—to do all for the people till the people shall, in his opinion, be able to act for themselves—to be, in short, a Cosmo, Trajan, and Washington, all in one—these we fully believe to have been his objects. How sadly he has failed in accomplishing some of them, we too well know; but the future will, perhaps, do him more justice than his contemporaries.

The Crown-Prince is generally understood to be an intelligent and moderate man—inferior to his brother in abilities and acquirements, but superior to him in strength of purpose and in firmness of character. We need not go beyond our own country and our own century, to find an example of an heir-apparent who ill fulfilled, as a sovereign, the liberal professions of his youth; but we trust that no such retrogression will stain the fair fame of the next successor to the Prussian throne. The same wise and virtuous men who have hitherto been his counsellors will preserve, we hope, their influence when their advice may be put in practice. But, however judicious the rule of the father may be, we cannot but look forward with some solicitude to the future of the young prince who is now amongst us. Political repentance sometimes comes too late; and it is very difficult to say whether the knell of the old order of things in Prussia has or has not sounded. If, however, there be any policy by which the stability of the dynasty can be assured, it is that on which there seems every reason to suppose that the Crown-Prince is willing to enter. To draw closer the ties which unite him to this country—to throw more and more power into the hands of the moderate constitutional party—to make few promises and to break none—never to appeal to force when trammelled by legal forms—to oppose a firm front to every attempt at revolution, and to disarm agitators by aiding, in every possible way, the mitigation of social evils, and the redress of social wrongs—to allow unbounded freedom of opinion, and to discountenance clerical usurpation—these are the methods, and these alone, by which the many difficulties of the next fifty years may be avoided or overcome.

If England were to look merely to her own interests, perhaps a strict policy of non-intervention might be that which it would be wisest for her to adopt in all Continental questions not directly concerning facility of intercourse or freedom of trade; but so low a view of our national duties is entirely alien to the feelings of the people. Is it, then, a small gain to secure the friendship of a country which, sprung from the Reformation, is moving constantly in the same political direction as ourselves? Across the whole breadth of Europe we have, with the exception of Sardinia, no other natural ally—no State which, as a State, would, in a war of opinion, be found upon the same side with ourselves. That such wars are at hand is only too possible. The late contest, which excited so many hopes, has come to an end without settling any one of the great questions of Europe; and the slightest disturbance of the political atmosphere in any quarter may bring on a storm. The interests of both countries point, therefore, to the closest alliance, personal and political, between the Courts of England and of Prussia; and we have but to express our earnest hope that the promise given by the reported liberal sentiments of Prince Frederick William may be fulfilled in his future policy and conduct.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

IV.

THAT our school of portraiture is at a very low ebb, will be questioned by few who have visited the chief room at the Academy, and who have there seen, in the place of honour, the portrait of the “Lord Mayor of London,” by S. A. Hart, R.A. *Punch* has done much to make the Lord Mayor and Corporation ridiculous, but Mr. Hart has done more, and has managed, perhaps unconsciously, to cast ridicule on another body—that of which he is a member. Putting aside the mass of full-length and smaller canvasses that are annually permitted to disfigure the walls of the Academy, and to vitiate the public taste, during three months of the year, because they have titled names tacked on to them, we have a great number left which are good in one respect or another; but where can we find a really great portrait-painter, who, like Velasquez, Vandyck, or Reynolds, not only

gives us the character, the expression, the inner life of his sitter, but the light, the colour, the tones, of nature? We have little hesitation in asserting that No. 785, a miniature, by Sir William Ross, comes nearer to the mark than any other at the Academy; and next to it we may name “Sir Colin Campbell,” by Philips—No. 493, by Alfred Corbould, and No. 514, by Boxall. It is true that Ross has little of the highest power of the portrait-painter—that of choosing the noblest moment of the sitter, when “the God within him lights his face.” He has little power of idealization—of that true idealization which does not seek to beautify the face by modelling it to any preconceived type in the artist’s mind, but only to ennoble the features, as earnest thought or strong feeling ennoble them for the moment, and sheds a sudden glory over them that leaves behind for ever a subtle trace of its purifying power. But Ross, without much exertion of thought, simply does his best to imitate what he sees; and, having a most refined sense of colour and appreciation of character, he produces works far more valuable than those of men of greater power of thought, but of less truthfulness and simplicity. Mr. H. W. Philips is on the high road to produce really fine portraits. His three pictures in the Academy this year show the most honest study of character, and a seeking—though attended with no great success, except in the portrait of “Sir Colin”—after truth of surface, colour, and light. He is thoroughly unconventional in treatment. The frank, manly look and bearing of Dr. Sandwith, and the stiff old soldier-like stoop of Sir Colin, are capital. No. 271, the portrait of Mr. Owen Jones, is most carefully studied; but the handling in all is very heavy and student-like. Sir John Watson Gordon paints manly, easy, characteristic portraits, but apparently with no attempt at the variety and beauty of flesh hues. His “David Cox” of this year is thoroughly fine, as far as it goes; but Mr. Gilbert’s full-length portrait of “Sir John” surpasses any exhibited by his sitter this year. No. 493, “Portrait of a Gentleman,” by Alfred Corbould, is a quiet, noble portrait, perhaps too low in tone, but very beautiful in colour, and altogether finely painted.

Boxall’s pictures are enigmas. They are most refined in expression and treatment, and admirable in colour; yet they are so wanting in finish and surface reality, and so messily painted, that many pass them by with indifference. Nevertheless, they prove the highest powers in the artist, though these are unfortunately rendered almost nugatory by the absence of lower ones. No. 514 is very powerful in expression and character, and the tenderness and transparency of the flesh tones are almost exaggerated. There is a life and intelligence in the eye that has rarely been surpassed; but the hand is not only unfinished, but very bad, as a mere sketch. No. 76 is a beautiful group of a mother and three children, daringly simple in arrangement, and full of the loveliest colour. It makes Sant’s pictures, on either side, look chalky and common—as indeed they are. The expression of the little girls’ heads is most refined; and the mother’s head is also full of life, but dreadfully out of drawing. Grant’s portrait of Sir Charles Crompton is admirable, and if placed in good hands for engraving, would be a valuable addition to the large number of fine legal portraits extant. No. 63, of the Duke of Rutland, is quiet and full of character; but Grant’s pictures this year are even poorer in tone than usual, and whiter in colour. To return, however, to Ross. It is rather a delicate task to give detailed notices of portraits when the originals are living among us—else No. 785 (referred to above) might be dwelt upon at some length. The wonderful working out of character which is strictly individual, and yet representative of a certain type, and the delicate truthfulness of light and colour in this miniature, make it quite a masterpiece of its kind. And we may say the same of No. 779. The group of mother and child is beautiful, thoroughly unaffected, and the picture is exquisite in colour throughout—the mother’s head especially. Nothing could surpass the little miniature of the “Countess of Lichfield” for tenderness and purity of colour and delicacy of modelling; and that of the “Princess Mary” nearly equals it. The head and the somewhat awkward attitude of the man’s figure in No. 734 are full of character. Thorburn’s picture—it can hardly be called portrait—of “Lady Elcho,” has in a high degree those qualities which give so much charm to his works. There is a look of grandeur and refinement in the figure and sweep of the dress, a depth of tone and purity of colour, with quiet harmonious feeling breathing through the whole, and an idealization of the head which, though often very noble, falls sometimes into exaggeration, and a prettiness of eye and lip. Thorburn will certainly lose ground if, in seeking after certain pictorial beauties, he forgets the absolute necessity of humble and thorough study from nature. No. 808, a portrait of the late General Lindsay, is very weak and unreal. There is much beauty in this artist’s portrait of the “Honourable Mrs. Russell.” The delicate expression of the head, the exquisite colour of the tapestry chair and transparent muslin dress, and the easy grace of the attitude, render it perfectly charming. Mr. H. T. Wells stands next in rank to Thorburn. No. 813 is a lovely group of children, forcibly painted, and very harmonious in colour. The baby is admirable as flesh painting, and there is a delicacy of drawing in the children’s hands rarely seen. The portraits of Lady Selina Vernon and Mrs. J. Watson are full of truthful and vigorous painting; and Nos. 714 and 792 are quiet, lady-like, and, at the same time, very characteristic pictures. Mr. Wells exhibits also a water-colour head of a little girl (No. 998) which is exquisite in

colour and expression. The large-sized miniature of Lord Suffield, by Mr. Moira, is very successful in every respect; but No. 828, by the same artist, is far inferior. "Sir De Lacy Evans," by Mr. Upton, is excellent. Richmond and Watts, whose chalk portraits might be placed beside those of any ancient or modern artist for intensity and refinement of expression, are both absent this year. Mr. C. Martin's life-sized chalk heads, especially No. 739 and 816, are first-rate.

There have not been so many signs of life among our landscapeists for several years past as we find in the present exhibition. Two years ago, Hook exhibited a sweet little study called "The Mid-day Meal"—the first of a series of pictures which have proved his intense love of English landscape, and his power of reproducing all its freshness, homeliness, and almost more than its richness of colour. His way of introducing the figures, and the simple feeling he breathes into them, add greatly to the charm of his pictures—they are poetical transcripts of English scenery and rural life. "The Passing Cloud" is perfect. It is impossible to describe it; but perhaps the loveliest passage in the landscape is the sunlit meadow, with the hay lying upon it, and the field sloping down to the right, with the peep of the distance beyond. The figures tell most touchingly a simple incident. In "Welcome, bonny Boat," the graduated greens of the receding coast, the colour of the water, and the sparkling greys of the pebbly beach, are as fine as possible; and in the "Fisherman's Good-night," the sky, the woods in shade, the group of fisherman, wife, and baby—and, above all, the shadow of the cliff upon the water—are rendered with the utmost beauty of colour and truth of effect. As long as Hook gives us such bits of nature—and English nature—few will regret his half-Venetian, half-studio pictures of three years back. The remarkable success of a figure-painter in landscape gives a valuable hint to landscape-students as to the use of severe discipline in drawing, and of close imitation. No. 526, "A Harvest Sunset," by John Linnel, would be a splendid picture, were it not spoiled by the false lilac hue of the clouds; but the landscape is wonderful for glowing, all-pervading sunlight. No. 503, by W. Linnel, is very fine in broad effect of intense light; but he has failed, too, in the sky; and the large tree on the left is black and heavy in colour. All Cooke's rough seas are vigorously and healthily painted this year; but his quiet Venice-pieces are very indifferent. No. 583, "Chioggia Fishing-vessels," has many very fine parts, especially the stormy sky on the left, and the drawing of the nets which are blown away from the mast by the violent squall; and No. 53, "Dutch Pinks Arriving," is most powerfully painted. Stanfield's "Abandoned" is a more impressive picture than any he has exhibited for several years. The old sea-stained hulk tossing about on the dreary desolate ocean, and the livid tempestuous sky, are admirably conceived, but the water, though cleverly painted and full of movement, does not look like mid-ocean as intended, but is half muddy, as though near shore; and the drawing of the waves in the right hand corner indicates shallowness, as though they were falling over rocks, while the sky, though grandly imagined, is painty rather than vapoury. Mr. Lee has given us a delightful surprise this year in his sea pieces, which, though rather ungenial in colour, are among the most earnest and successful studies from nature in the Academy, and give proof of an energy and power we should never have dreamt of finding in the manufacturer of faded landscapes for the reception of Cooper's faded cattle. No. 221, "The Breakwater at Plymouth" is the finest. The water spreading over the flat pier is admirably given, and the tossing of the spray along the wall up to the lighthouse is very real and grand. In this and in the three others the water is the most successful part, and the skies the least so, being hard and cold in colour. Redgrave's "Little Red Riding-hood" is a delightful little picture, much more beautiful in colour and more transparent in handling than his works generally are, and the tree trunks are capably drawn. One of the best landscapes in the whole exhibition is to be found in the architectural room, entitled, "The Woods in Summer, Sussex," by Mr. A. J. Lewis. The sky is very beautiful, the tree-drawing excellent, the foreground carefully studied, and over all is a charming effect of light. There is true feeling for nature shown in this picture. "The Stream from Llyn Idwal, Carnarvonshire," by Mr. A. W. Hunt, is a careful study. The breaking of the clouds over the mountain is finely rendered, but there is a look of littleness and spottiness about the picture that destroys its grandeur. Nos. 353 and 378, by Mr. W. Davis, are small studies of evening effects—the skies in both are very fine in light and colour. "The Culcullen Hills," by Mr. J. W. Inchbold, is marvellously careful in drawing and detail, and the sky fine in colour and gradation; but the foreground reminds one of a geological map from want of mass. There are many more landscapes that deserve notice, especially those by Miss B. Smith, Oakes, Webbe, Lupton, and Bond. The only picture exhibited by Anthony is quite unworthy of his powers, and those of W. F. Witherington, R.A., are dead in colour and altogether commonplace.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

BY a strange perversity, inherent in human nature, we are often apt to imagine that individuals who have attained a sudden and brilliant reputation do not owe their fame to their genius, but to adventitious and outward advantages, without which they would never have risen above mediocrity. It is pos-

sible, therefore, that some among the overflowing audience gathered together on Saturday last to witness the *début* of Mademoiselle Piccolomini were inclined to doubt whether her fame might not be partly owing to the *prestige* of her name, and to the circumstances under which she made her first appearance on the Continent. The first five minutes, however, were sufficient to decide the question whether she was indeed a great *artiste*, unrivalled and unapproachable in her own peculiar line. At the end of every act she was loudly called for; her performance was repeatedly interrupted by enthusiastic demonstrations of delight; and when the curtain fell, the audience would not be satisfied until she had three times appeared before them to receive their thanks and plaudits.

As the opera of *La Traviata* is not yet familiar to the general public, we may give such a sketch of it as will show how trying are the demands which the plot makes upon an actress, and how impossible it would be for anyone to fill the part of Violetta who could not equally well represent the varying shades and highest extremes both of happiness and of sorrow. The opera is founded upon the drama of *La Dame aux Camélias*, brought out a few years ago at the Théâtre du Vaudeville. M. Dumas' play, however, is intended to depict a phase of modern Parisian life, and as the novel from which it is taken is founded on facts, we must suppose it to be a faithful representation. Verdi, on the other hand, in making use of the same story, has laid the scene in the beginning of the last century, perhaps, among other reasons, out of regard to *les bienséances*.

In the first act, the curtain rises on a *salon* magnificently furnished in the taste of the period. The room is filling fast with guests, whom Mademoiselle Piccolomini, as Violetta, is receiving with the elegance, the simple grace, and the refined sprightliness, which only a thorough lady could exhibit. Tables, on which a banquet is spread, are seen in the background; but, ere the feast begins, Gaston, Vicomte de Setorieres, introduces to the hostess Alfredo de Germont, who is destined to be the hero of the drama. After some conversation between the two, Violetta rises and pours out wine for her guest, who, in obedience to her request, sings a pleasing Bacchanalian song. Violetta, inspired by the strain, replies to it, exclaiming, "Tutto è follia nel mondo ciò che non è piacer"—a sentiment which she delivers with admirable spirit and enchanting gaiety. The chorus following her song is scarcely terminated, when music is heard in the distance, and Violetta invites her friends to leave the *salon*, and repair to the ball-room. She has hardly taken half a dozen steps, when, seized by a sudden spasm, she totters to a sofa. Assuring her guests that it is nothing, and motioning them to proceed, she looks into the mirror, and turning away, shocked at her own paleness, finds that Alfredo is near her. He approaches, and speaks of his love, which she attempts at first to turn into a jest. Then, finding he is in earnest, she entreats him in a pathetic air to fly from her, but at last gives him a white camelia, desiring him to bring it back when it shall have faded. Soon afterwards, her guests depart, and when she is left alone, her happiness in discovering that at last she really loves and is loved, mingled with the despair she experiences as thoughts of her past life rise before her, finds expression in a grand scena, which concludes by her determining to plunge deeper than ever into the vortex of dissipation, and in it to end her days. Here the pathos of her voice, the changeful expression of her countenance, and her wonderful acting were received with shouts of applause, which the music, taken by itself, would never have elicited.

A considerable period is supposed to elapse between the first and second acts. In the latter, we are taken to a country-house near Paris, where Alfredo and Violetta are residing, in a state of tranquil happiness which is portrayed by Alfredo in a song rendered by Signor Calzolari with equal grace and feeling. At the termination of the aria, Violetta's maid, Amina, enters the room, and Alfredo discovers from her that her mistress, almost ruined by the expenses she has incurred on his account, is about to sell all her possessions. On hearing this, Alfredo instantly sets off for Paris, to prevent the sacrifice; and while he is absent, his father, Germont, who has found out his son's retreat, manages to obtain an interview with Violetta. At first he visits her with reproaches; but then, touched by the generosity which he finds she has shown towards Alfredo, he cries out, "Ah! il passato, perché, perché v'accusa?" To this she answers, "Più non esiste—or amo Alfredo, e Dio lo cancellò col pentimento mio." Nothing could surpass the earnestness, fire, and tenderness with which Mademoiselle Piccolomini uttered these words, and the noble gesture by which they were accompanied. Germont then entreats her to renounce Alfredo, assuring her that the happiness of his family depends upon her giving up the connexion. Moved by his entreaties, she consents, after a terrible struggle, to make the sacrifice; and she bids Germont command her what to do. He desires her to tell Alfredo that she does not love him; but she mournfully replies that he will not believe it. He suggests to her to leave him—her only answer is that he will follow her. At last she tells him she has thought of a means by which Alfredo may be restored to his family; and then, in an air full of melancholy pathos, she entreats that, as a reward for her sacrifice, her memory may not be cursed after her death, for she feels that she shall never survive the separation. Germont then withdraws; and Alfredo soon afterwards returns. Violetta tells him that his father is in the garden, and, scarcely able to restrain her tears, desires him to seek him there; and then, throwing herself into

her lover's arms, she utters what he little imagines is a farewell, pouring forth her whole soul, all its love and anguish, in the affecting supplication, "Amami Alfredo, quant' io t' amo! Addio!" She has not long left the room, when a servant enters, and gives Alfredo a letter from Violetta, which tells him that she has abandoned him for ever. His father then comes to him from the garden, and endeavours, in a soothing *aria*, to recal him to thoughts of home and peace.

The following scene introduces us to a *salon* in the palace of Flora Berovix, who is giving a splendid *fête*. Violetta has been invited to the banquet, and on entering the *salon*, looking pale and ill, and hanging on the arm of Baron Doughol, is startled by seeing Alfredo among the guests. Her situation is rendered all the more painful by the sarcasms which Alfredo utters whilst occupied in staking money on a game at cards, in the course of which he quarrels with Doughol, who challenges him in Violetta's hearing. After the guests have departed for the supper room, Violetta returns, followed by Alfredo, whom she has sent for in order to entreat him to fly from the peril that awaits him. He consents on condition of her accompanying him, on which she supplicates him to forget her sad name, and allows him to imagine that she loves Doughol. Exasperated by her words, he rushes into the banqueting room, summons the guests to follow him, declares to them his contempt for Violetta, and dashes her portrait on the ground, amidst exclamations of indignation against him from the assembled company. In the manner in which Violetta receives this base and cruel treatment, one of Mademoiselle Piccolomini's greatest triumphs is achieved. She scarcely utters a word, but the anguish displayed in the bewildered gaze of the wide open eyes, the clenched hands, the blanched fast-closed lips, and the utter prostration of both body and mind was far more impressive than would have been the most heartrending strains.

The scene of the third act is laid in Violetta's chamber, where we see her lying in a dying condition, with Amina asleep in a chair beside her bed. Soft dream-like music fills the air. Presently she wakes, calls to Amina, attempts to rise, and with difficulty reaches her easy chair. She then takes from her bosom a letter, which she reads in a voice so hollow and deathlike that we shudder whilst listening to it, as though we were in presence of the terrible reality. It is from Alfredo's father, and he writes to tell Violetta that his son will speedily come to her accompanied by himself. But she feels that this dearest solace has arrived too late, and in a most touching *aria* she bids farewell to past happiness, and after entreating Heaven to pardon her sins, totters across the room, and sinks back exhausted in her chair. Just then is heard a bacchanalian chorus in the street, and very impressive is the contrast between the wild joyousness of the Carnival tune and the loneliness and sadness of that chamber of death. The music has scarcely ceased, when Alfredo is announced, and, forgetting for a moment all her past sufferings, strengthened by hope and joy, she starts up from her chair with flushing cheeks and radiant eyes, and rushes into his arms, bursting into a song of triumphant rejoicing in anticipation of happiness in store. As soon as the song is ended, she entreats Alfredo to accompany her to the temple, that she may give thanks for his return; but she can scarcely reach her chair ere a paroxysm comes on which makes her almost faint. She soon revives, however, and again attempts to put on her mantle, when she finds that her strength is once more failing her. Alfredo, alarmed, desires Amina to send for the doctor, when Violetta cries out, in panting, impassioned tones, which thrilled through the hearts of all who heard them: "Digli, che Alfredo è ritornato all' amor mio—digli che vivere ancor vogl' io!" But, soon becoming conscious that earthly aid will no longer avail her, she laments her unhappy destiny in a duet with Alfredo, at the close of which she falls into a passion of grief too painful almost to witness. In the last scene, the gradual approach of death, and the changeful rising and sinking of the lamp of life, are given by Mademoiselle Piccolomini with inimitable truthfulness, and yet idealisation of the last fearful struggle. A moment before her death, she exclaims that her pains have departed—that she has returned to life; but, with a radiant expression of happiness diffused over her countenance, and the words "Oh gioia!" upon her lips, she expires.

It will have been seen that, while speaking of the plot, we have scarcely alluded to the music. The fact is, that the latter is a mere accessory, and that the piece is to be regarded less as an opera than as a powerful drama set to music, of little significance or beauty in itself. Neither have we said much respecting Middle. Piccolomini's vocal powers, because it is as a dramatic artist that she is greatest; and it is principally to her acting that her success is due. Charming as her voice is, the singer was eclipsed by the actress. In *La Traviata* the part seems to have been expressly created for her. Different as are the emotions which she has to express, she renders them all with equal truthfulness, and, putting her whole heart into whatever she has to feel or to do, her earnestness has its reward. So young, and so gifted, Middle. Piccolomini has a brilliant career open before her. Of the manner in which she was supported, it must suffice to say that Signor Calzolari never played better, and that Beneventano acted and sang the part of Germont in a way which showed that the character was admirably suited to his powers.

We cannot conclude without one word of remark on the *moral*

of the opera. Affecting and exciting as the story is throughout, we greatly regret that Verdi should have chosen a subject so demoralizing and unhealthy in sentiment. It is bad taste, to say the least, thus to drag to light phases of life of which it is sufficient to know that they unfortunately exist; and it is opposed to all the highest interests of morality to excite our sympathies in behalf of such a character as Violetta, who, while deserving of our pity, ought not to be represented in such a way as to excite our admiration and love. However we may attempt to disguise the fact—to wrap it up in soft-sounding words and high-flown phrases—vice is vice, in what light soever it may appear, and we are sinning against right when we make it seem more fascinating than virtue. If such plots find favour in England, we should at once renounce all hope of seeing public morality in any way benefited by the teachings of the stage. At any rate, of *La Traviata* we should be sorry to think that it had made a successful appeal to "the merciful construction of good women."

THE CRYSTAL PALACE FLOWER SHOW.

IT is not the lovers of music alone whose tastes the Directors of the Crystal Palace seek to gratify. A passion for flowers is as widely diffused amongst us as a love of music, and in order to provide pleasures for the eye as well as the ear, the first Flower Show of the season was held in the building on Saturday last. Rarely has a more brilliant assemblage been gathered together. The nave was a perfect Longchamps as regarded the display of fashion, and the eye was bewildered by the gay colours of the dresses and the bright hues of the flowers. The doors were thrown open to the public at twelve o'clock, and instantly the visitors began to flow in one continuous stream down the nave, in the middle of which the flower-stands, protected by an awning, were erected. So great, however, was the crush, and so slow the passage of those who, by dint of perseverance, succeeded in getting near the flowers, that numbers branched off every now and then into the lateral courts, and waited until the press being over, they could see and enjoy at their leisure a display as beautiful and varied as it was creditable to the science, skill, and enterprise of our professional and amateur horticulturists. What may be effected when knowledge is systematically brought to bear upon a subject, and when constant care is united with ceaseless experiment, was never better illustrated than in the splendid plants which gained the prizes in this floral *fête*. The azaleas occupied, and deservedly, the largest space, for the beauty and luxuriance which they have been made to attain surpass anything we have hitherto seen. It is a well-known fact in horticulture that we cannot have both foliage and flowers in equal perfection at the same time, but that the former must be temporarily sacrificed for the sake of the latter. Consequently, amidst the mass of blossoms with which the plants were laden, scarcely a leaf was to be seen, the whole power and strength of the shrubs having apparently been expended in producing flowers. The effect of such masses of colour, varying from the purest white to the deepest crimson and orange, was exceedingly striking, and the harmonious blending of so many and seemingly dissimilar tints was equally so. Next in luxuriance of growth and abundance of blossoms, may be named the pelargoniums. Amongst them, however, we did not perceive many new varieties, and those which appeared to be the favourites were not so remarkable for the richness of their colours as for their size and height. Of roses there was a goodly show, and the visitors seemed never tired of admiring their beauty and inhaling their perfume. One tree, covered with large yellow roses, proved especially attractive, and well merited to be elected queen of the tribe.

The orchids took up a considerable space on the stands, and excited, as they always do, great interest. No flowers tell so well the story of their origin. We feel that such gorgeous colours and such peculiar forms must belong to the tropical climates, where Nature works after an exceptional manner, and delights in creating forms strangely fantastic, yet wondrously beautiful and surpassingly elegant. The rhododendrons were the least remarkable feature in the show; and the ericas, beautiful as they are, looked small and insignificant amongst plants the generality of which boasted blossoms of a larger growth and more pronounced colour. Of fuchsias there were but few specimens; but the three to which prizes were awarded were magnificent plants, and were covered with a profusion of blossoms, the coloured calices of which were so completely turned back as fully to display the deep purple of the petals they enclosed. In calceolarias the show was very good, and the specimens exhibited only made us regret that this beautiful class of flowers is not even more extensively cultivated than it is at present in our gardens. In the centre of the flower-show the Royal National Tulip Society had a stand set apart for their exhibition. It did not, however, attract any very great attention; for though the colours of the flowers were splendid, and the markings of many specimens most delicate, they could not bear comparison with the more brilliant exotics which have been cultivated since tulips were first in vogue. In fruits, the display was not very great; but we noticed some excellent specimens of Muscat grapes, as well as pines, melons, figs, peaches, strawberries, &c.

The second Opera concert, which took place on the previous day, was even more successful than the first. Nearly all the songs were encored, and the pleasure with which the audience—which was still more numerous than on the former occasion—

listened to their favourite vocalists, evidently inspired them to sing their very best. Mario and Madame Grisi gave with most graceful abandon and sweetness of expression the exquisite little duet, "Tornami a dir." Gardoni won an encore by the charming way in which he rendered "Una furtiva lagrima"—as did Mario with the beautiful aria, "Il mio tesoro;" and the madrigal, "Now is the Month of Maying," was also encored. The *Euryanthe* and *William Tell* overtures were excellently played—the tones of the band being heard to the furthest distance, and sounding as clear as a bell. The grand finale from Rossini, which concluded the first part, was given with the utmost spirit, and the chorus acquitted itself admirably in the "Nume del Ciel," from *Massaniello*, with which the concert concluded.

REVIEWS.

BAZANCOURT'S CRIMEAN EXPEDITION.*

M. DE BAZANCOURT has published the second volume of the history of the Crimean expedition, and has carried his narrative down to the capture of Sebastopol. He has now removed, in the most satisfactory manner, any apprehension which his first volume may have awakened lest his version of the story should be received by posterity as the true one, and lest Englishmen should have to accept their position in the annals of the Russian war from the judgment of an unfriendly foreigner. At first, it was natural to entertain such a fear, for M. de Bazancourt writes with the responsibility and the advantages of an official position; and it might be thought that the French Government would not permit a work, written by its order, to appear, unless its contents had been approved. But the second volume sets every doubt completely at rest. It is so avowedly, so manifestly, a superficial account of what happened in the French camp only—it is so entirely free from any pretensions to the fairness and completeness of a serious history—that the susceptibility of English honour need no more be aroused by its contents than a French soldier need complain that the correspondents of London journals occupy themselves exclusively with the fortunes of the English army. The work, indeed, resembles very closely the production of a newspaper correspondent. It slurs over all that the writer had no opportunity of knowing—it relates and invents gossip—and it paints with some vivacity and effect the camp scenes with which personal intercourse made the writer familiar. M. de Bazancourt was for some months in the French camp before Sebastopol. He examined the topography of the position of the allies—he made himself acquainted with the operations and plans of the engineers—he talked over Alma and Inkermann with French officers, and he learnt the personal history of the commanders most conspicuous in the French camp. Possessing, in addition to these sources of information, a profound ignorance of everything connected with the English, a hearty contempt for Lord Raglan, and an unflinching admiration for the genius of the French Emperor, he conceived himself quite entitled to write the history of the war. We may add to this, that he could not but have been conscious of the charms of his brilliant style; and he might naturally expect that any little inaccuracies would readily be pardoned in a writer who could tell his tale in so sparkling and epigrammatic a manner. At the same time, we may remark that his mode of writing is one of the means which M. de Bazancourt successfully employs to indicate that he does not mean his narrative as a sober historical chronicle. He has carefully studied, and learnt to imitate, the romances of M. Dumas; and by adding, every now and then, a touch in the style of the great novelist, he shows that he has acquired the art of blending fiction with truth. There is a passage in his description of the cavalry charge at Balaklava which is worthy of "Monte Christo" itself. Lord Cardigan is painted as placing himself at the head of the men destined to the hopeless and useless struggle, throwing a glance of profound sorrow over his noble regiments, and then spurring forward his horse, while exclaiming, "En avant le dernier des Cardigans!"

We have heard it said that English officers, nettled at the disparaging way in which M. de Bazancourt treats the great achievements of our arms, have expressed a wish to publish counter-statements, and to let the world know the real truth. Their irritation will, we think, be considerably lessened if they examine the contents of this volume sufficiently to see how very small a part the English army occupies on the stage of M. de Bazancourt's history. We cannot be very angry with a man who evidently knows and cares so little about us; and as soon as we are sure that it is not the history of the allies, but the history of the French, that M. de Bazancourt wishes to write, we may let him say what he pleases. As, however, the title would seem to imply that the work had a wider scope, it may be useful to give a few instances of the different magnitude which English and French affairs have in the eyes of the author. The name of General Simpson is mentioned twice only—once on the occasion of his appointment, and once when we are told that Pélissier gave him the

signal to advance in an attack. Every action, almost every turn of thought, in the mind of Marshal Pélissier is, on the contrary, minutely chronicled. About thirty sketches are given of the life and character of officers made eminent by their conduct during the siege, or their previous career; and among these Sir George Cathcart is the only Englishman. The description of the attack of the 18th June is continued through twenty-seven pages, of which about three-quarters of a page are allotted to the exploits of the English. An equal space contains all that M. de Bazancourt thinks necessary to say of the doings of our army on the 8th September, while thirty pages hardly suffice for the elaborate and detailed account of the fortunes of every French division. The successful expedition into the Sea of Azoff, which contributed nearly as much, perhaps, as the fall of the Malakoff to the successful termination of the war, receives a tribute to its importance in a hasty sketch of five pages. All the more remarkable French orders of the day are inserted, but hardly any of the English. After the fall of Sebastopol has been described, the speech of congratulation made by the Archbishop of Paris to the Emperor is given at full length, and the volume concludes with the reflection that in this great question of European politics, the Emperor of the French carried the sword of Alexander—a remark which, if not very apposite or profound, sufficiently indicates the general purpose of the author.

Were there traceable in the work any serious intention of writing the whole history of the campaign, we could not avoid examining M. de Bazancourt's account of the battle of Inkermann. His notion is briefly this:—The English were taken off their guard, and were being rapidly annihilated. Lord Raglan was completely overpowered, and remained despairing and inactive; but Bosquet immediately comprehended the whole plan of the attack, led his men up, who were quite alert and prepared, saved the English, and won the day. It would seem, from the general tenour of the narrative, as if the English did no great good, and rendered no better service than that of supplying material for a few brilliant paragraphs about "the heroic resistance of despair," "calm but unavailing courage," and the like. At first sight, a misrepresentation so serious seems as if it must have been maliciously intentional; but the rest of the volume makes us think that the English are omitted here, as elsewhere, simply because M. de Bazancourt takes no interest in them. Let us place ourselves in the position of a French civilian, who, three months after the battle, enters the French camp. He talks over the day of Inkermann with military friends—he hears general expressions, such as that the English fought hard, that Bosquet won the battle, that the Zouaves are the finest troops in the world—all the small, telling facts he gathers are those that have occurred to the French army—all the persons in whom he and his informants are interested, are Frenchmen. We can easily fancy what sort of history the civilian would write, if his history consisted of an arranged and decorated series of notes made during the course of such conversations; and we know what sort of notes for his history M. de Bazancourt made, for he published them last year in the shape of a volume called *Five Months in the Camp before Sebastopol*. The volume consisted of a collection of letters neither unamusing nor uninteresting, addressed to the French Minister of the Interior. For Frenchmen, these letters may be very good reading, but they are as far from the region of historical truth as the letters of Mr. Russell. We have not got to history yet. When we hear that Lord Raglan overlooked the danger of an attack on the side of Inkermann, we want to know whether the share of the general operations assigned to him would have permitted him to profit by his foresight if he had perceived the danger as clearly as others. When we are told that Lord Raglan was cold and inaccessible to Canrobert, we should like to be informed how often he was pestered by the communication of impracticable schemes, and the announcement of idle and contradictory messages.

The only part of the volume that can be said to give any new information is that relating to the circumstances which led to Marshal Canrobert's resignation. In the spring of 1855, the Emperor was anxious that a portion of the allied army should take the field, and attempt the investment of Sebastopol; and he forwarded an elaborate plan of operations which has been lately published, and which we leave to the criticism of military tacticians. Before this plan arrived, the commanders-in-chief had agreed on and despatched an expedition to Kertch, which was suddenly recalled on the receipt of a telegraphic order to that effect, transmitted from Paris. Lord Raglan was naturally and justifiably annoyed at this; and when the Emperor's scheme was submitted to him, he peremptorily refused to accede to it. This caused considerable awkwardness between the two commanders, and M. de Bazancourt tells us that at last Canrobert, feeling that a division would be fatal, magnanimously offered that Lord Raglan should be generalissimo, promised to act under his directions, and tried to persuade Omar Pasha also to accept a subordinate position. After much hesitation, Lord Raglan accepted the offer, and said that his first order was that a body of French troops should be brought to assist the English in the construction of their siege-works. Canrobert at once drew back, and said that this was impossible; so that Lord Raglan's supreme command had a very short duration, and does not seem to have taxed the French general's magnanimity in any very great degree, as he seems merely to have meant that he would be happy

* *L'Expédition de Crimée jusqu'à la prise de Sébastopol.* Par le Baron de Bazancourt. Paris: Amyot. 1856.
Cinq Mois au Camp devant Sébastopol. Par le Baron de Bazancourt. Paris. 1855.

to obey Lord Raglan if the orders he received were such as he approved of. Lord Raglan's opinion prevailed, and the Emperor's scheme was abandoned; but as this was humiliating and mortifying to Canrobert, he thought it better that he should give place to a new commander-in-chief. On this story we may observe, first, that Lord Raglan's opinion was justified by the event, for the combined success of the direct siege, and of the expedition to the Sea of Azoff, did eventually, as Lord Raglan predicted, give the Allies the command of the Crimea; and secondly, the fact that the Emperor's plan was rejected abundantly dispels the opinion, much too readily received, that Lord Raglan was a cypher in the councils of the Allies, and that the French directed the expedition exactly as they pleased.

MONT BLANC.*

SINCE Mr. Albert Smith took Mont Blanc under his patronage, that once terrible mountain has gained in good name even more than it has lost in mysterious dignity. To the interest which has been excited by his very amusing entertainments, we owe, no doubt, the present reprint of Mr. Auldjo's book; and perhaps even the towering ambition of Mr. Hudson would have been satisfied by climbing Monte Rosa, if the dangers and the pleasures of the ascent of her lord had not been made public property. Mr. Auldjo ascended the "monarch of mountains" on the 8th and 9th of August, 1827. His expedition was a great event in its day, and his narrative of it gained him the gold medal of Civil Merit from the late King of Prussia, and was also rewarded by an autograph letter of approval from the ex-King of Bavaria, and by the gift of a diamond ring from the King of Sardinia. Mr. Auldjo, in his preface to this new edition, advises future travellers to devote three, not two days, to the ascent. Far more time can thus, he says, be spent on the highest point, and the beauties of the glaciers may be more leisurely surveyed.

There is not, of course, much in his account of the route from Chamouni to the summit which is now very surprising or new. The familiar obstacles and landmarks are passed, the usual precautions are adopted, and the usual dangers are feared. Mr. Auldjo suffered very much more from the rarity of the air and from fatigue, than the bold and hardy mountaineers of whose exploits we shall shortly speak. On his way down the mountain, one of those sudden and violent thunderstorms so common among the high Alps came on, and increased not a little the fatigues of his perilous and difficult enterprise, which was, however, successfully terminated, after an absence from Chamouni of only thirty-seven hours. The ascent and descent of Mont Blanc had only once before been made in so short a time. Altogether, Mr. Auldjo's account of his adventures is very readable, and to all who are ambitious of following his steps this republication will be most acceptable. It will, we doubt not, be carried this year to Switzerland in many a portmanteau. Here in London, however, it is read at a disadvantage. We stay-at-home people are apt to look for something more interesting than mere guide-book details, however pleasantly written, and we gladly lay aside Mr. Auldjo for Forbes or Von Tschudi. It is only fair to say that some geological and botanical facts are given in the appendix. They are, however, very meagre. One of the saxifrages, we observe, grows on the Grands Mulets. Saussure found *Silene acaulis* at the great height of 11,660 feet. A short account of the different ascents to the summit of Mont Blanc is also given in the appendix to this volume, which forms one of that admirable series, *The Traveller's Library*. It appears that there were fourteen successful attempts before Mr. Auldjo's, and that in all eighteen persons, not including guides, had gained the summit. Ten of these were Englishmen.

Mr. Hudson and his companions, four in number, ascended Mont Blanc in August, 1855, without guides, by a new route. Their starting point was the charming little hotel of Mount Joli, at St. Gervais, which they left about nine in the morning. Fifty minutes' walk brought them to the village of Bionay, when they left the high road, and struck into a footpath leading over the Col de Voza to Chamouni. It took fifty minutes more to reach Bionassay, and about forty to traverse the distance between that village and the highest chalets on Mount Lacha. It was nearly five o'clock before they reached their sleeping quarters, beside a spring of excellent water, a luxury not met with at the Grands Mulets. About six, says Mr. Hudson—

The clouds, which apparently did not extend to a very considerable height above us, suddenly dropped, and thus caused one of those instantaneous and glorious transitions not unfrequent among the Alps. One minute we were in mid-winter, working hard to keep ourselves warm, and the next, all was bright and clear overhead, while directly before us, the Aiguille du Gouté, the commencement of the morrow's climb, reared her steep sides, covered with narrow glaciers; whilst on our right was the noble Aiguille de Bionassay, covered on the north side with snow of unsullied purity, but of most appalling steepness.

The travellers passed the night in a rudely-constructed cabin, half-hut, half-tent, snatching a few hours of sleep, as well as they could, in spite of violent gusts of wind, and the roar of numerous avalanches. The morning of August 14th was calm, and the sky clear and starlit. The temperature was not much below the

freezing point, even just before daybreak. The signal for a start was given at four A.M. They were now about to climb the Aiguille du Gouté. Twenty minutes' walk brought them to the edge of a steep and narrow ice stream, a *couloir* inclined at an angle of forty-three degrees. This they crossed in safety, and at exactly twelve minutes past six o'clock they stood on the top of the Aiguille, 13,000 feet high.

By keeping close to the precipices overhanging the Glacier de Bionassay, they escaped all descent, and mounted gradually towards the Dôme du Gouté, seeing a few large *crevasses*, but not being obliged to cross any. After arriving on the ridge of the Dôme, they saw Mont Blanc before them, and looked down on the Grand Plateau. Two routes lead from the Dôme to the summit. One of these crosses the Grand Plateau, and joins the Chamouni line—the other leads over the *arête* which connects the Dôme with Mont Blanc, by the ice-mound called the *Bosse du Dromédaire*. Mr. Hudson and his companions chose the former route, for very good reasons; but they state it as their opinion that the route by the *Bosse du Dromédaire*, which has hitherto been believed impracticable, may prove to be far easier than has been generally supposed. If so, St. Gervais will probably supersede Chamouni as the point of departure for the ascent of Mont Blanc. Thirty-five minutes of rapid descent took the travellers from the Dôme to the further side of the Grand Plateau. Here they halted, and left behind all incumbrances. The first obstacle, after leaving this point, was a deep and broad *crevasse*, which has its south-western origin in the Rochers Rouges. This they crossed by a narrow snow-bridge, which rose in the centre "quite into a thin edge." Beyond this lies the well-known *Corridor*. They mounted slowly through the gorge, marching nearly due south. At the expiration of one hour and a half from the Grand Plateau, they were at the foot of the Mur de la Côte:—

The terrible colouring (says Mr. Hudson) with which Mr. Albert Smith has painted this well-known portion of the route has been the fertile source of doubt and hesitation, and has deterred many from attempting the ascent. The horrors of the Mur de la Côte are perhaps impressed more vividly upon the imagination by means of the excellent diagram in which are depicted the whole party of guides and travellers sticking like flies to a "tremendous and almost perpendicular wall of ice," while beneath yawn fearful chasms, into which "a single false step would plunge the unfortunate traveller."

It would appear, from the Chamouni accounts, that the guides, on their arrival at the extremity of the Corridor, ascend in an oblique direction along the face of the Mur de la Côte, and, after traversing this wall of ice for some time, skirt its south-eastern angle. Hence their path overhangs an awful chasm, of the depth of which no notion can be formed.

Instead of adopting the orthodox zig-zag, we turned directly to the right, meeting the slope *en face*, and thus avoided these terrible precipices. Should any future traveller follow our route, and miss his footing, even when near the summit, he would, if ascending, simply lose his labour, and, if descending, he would hasten his return to Chamouni; for in either case he would slide downwards until his course was arrested by the soft snow of the Corridor.

The inclination of the upper part of the Mur de la Côte is 46°. This is the most abrupt height which has to be surmounted on the whole ascent to Mont Blanc. How loosely the words "perpendicular" and "almost perpendicular" are showered about by most Alpine travellers! The height of the top of the Mur above the Corridor appeared to Mr. Hudson to be about 300 feet. Its ascent occupied three-quarters of an hour; and a few minutes' walking then brought the whole party to the rocks known as the Petits Mulets. Here Mr. Hudson observes:—

We are not unfrequently told by gentlemen who have attained our present height, and have afterwards published their experience, that every one suffers, more or less, at these great elevations, from nausea, vomiting, and drowsiness, which are sometimes accompanied by bleeding at the nose, eyes, or ears, and by an utter prostration of strength.

Now this is by no means universally true; for of our party of five here collected together merely from a similarity of tastes, not one at any time experienced the slightest tendency to affections of this character.

At 12.35, the little band stepped almost simultaneously on the top of the mountain. They remained here only a few minutes; but, luckily, two of them remembered that it would be desirable to examine the steepness of the snows which lead towards the Bosse du Dromédaire. They saw no reason to alter the opinion to which we have alluded above. The descent was accomplished without serious accident, but not without some mishaps.

St. Gervais is 2600 feet above the sea. The cabin where the travellers passed the night is about 7000 feet above St. Gervais. Six hours is enough to go from St. Gervais to the cabin; and from this point, eight hours and thirty-five minutes are necessary to reach the summit of Mont Blanc. There are no *crevasses* between St. Gervais and the point where the St. Gervais route merges in the Chamouni one. If we compare these facts and figures with the dates and distances of the usual plan of ascent, the St. Gervais route would appear to be rather the easier of the two. It is very desirable that some of the gains which have hitherto gone to the guides of Chamouni, should be directed into the pockets of the less extortionate people of St. Gervais. The ascent from that place costs about 4*l*. The guides at Courmayeur ask *le prix de Chamouni*, and would, it seems, not much mind settling accounts with any one who attempted to undersell them by sending after them a rifle ball or two. Full details of their conduct to Mr. Hudson and his friends will be found in the book under review. We hope that many readers will consult it, for this volume, although it makes no claims to literary merit, is the plain and unvarnished narrative of a very remarkable feat. We could wish one little change. There is too much eating and drinking in its pages. We think that Mr. Hudson,

* *Narrative of an Ascent to the Summit of Mont Blanc*. By John Auldjo, Esq. London: Longmans, 1856.

An Ascent of Mont Blanc by a New Route, and without Guides. By the Rev. C. Hudson and E. S. Kennedy, Esq. London: Longmans, 1856.

without subscribing to the opinion of the guide who told Sausure that if he went up again, he would only take with him a bottle of scent and a small parasol, might do well, if this work reaches a second edition, to omit some of these exceedingly English particulars. We trust, too, that the appearance and favourable reception of this work may not entail upon mankind the infliction of a number of *brochures* from the pens of long-vacation tourists. It is one thing to be able to climb the Alps—it is another to be able to write about them. We find, alas! in most things only what we bring to them; and a mind which has fed exclusively upon classics and mathematics is ill-fitted to speak of the High Alps. Our travellers must stoop to learn, and must remember that there are other and higher things to be done in Switzerland than to make ascents and to rival each other in long mountain walks. It will take some four or five well-employed seasons before they can learn, so to speak, even the alphabet of the Alps. We would willingly see more of our tourists hard at work among the plants and rocks of the region below the snow-line. Not that we at all sympathize with those persons whom Mr. Hudson so well combats, who speak much of the danger of the *tour de force* which are beginning to become so fashionable. We think the perils are generally rather over-rated; nor do we despise the enjoyment of wandering for scenery or for adventure only.

Few persons, we trust, who have had the good fortune to cross, in fine weather, one of the high glacier passes which lead over the great chain into the Vallais, will either forget the sensations which they experienced or be so selfish as to wish to deprive others of similar gratifications. Who can forget the muster in the early morning, long before the first light of dawn has begun to kindle on the mountains, which stand up all round, silent and ghostly, lifting eight thousand feet of silver shining snow? Who can forget the start before the little hamlet is awake—the stars fading out one by one over Italy—the mighty peaks flushing in the growing day—then the blaze of sunlight as we emerge from the valley shadows, and as the sound of the Alp horn comes up along the pastures to tell us that the world below is rising to its labour? Ere long we reach the snowline, and see perhaps the chamois, which loves the debateable land between frost and flowers, playing above us till our constant advance makes it fear that harm is intended. Who can forget the hours of struggle over rock and snowslope—hurrying here lest the avalanches should overwhelm us, there lying down exhausted and careless, for the time, of avalanches and everything else that is to be feared? At last comes the joy of setting foot upon the topmost ridge, and looking down on another and a different world. Then the dangers of the precipice are exchanged for those of the glacier, and we descend slowly and tied together. The mountains, as we sink lower and lower, seem to grow in height, and as the day declines we see the clouds “laying themselves down to sleep on their vast ledges.” At last the darkness begins to fall around us, and it is night before we see the lights in the village to which we are bound twinkling far down through the valley mist.

These are great pleasures, and no right-minded man would seek to depreciate them. What we blame in many of our travelling countrymen is, not what they do, but what they leave undone. When the early autumn scatters them over the ice-fields of Switzerland and Savoy, they lead too often the life of mere ibexes. They climb and they descend, going up in the day to gaze, and coming down at night to feed; but they bring away scarcely any definite impressions. “It is very beautiful, very wonderful.” This they all say, and in most cases they can say no more. Surely this proves that there is something wrong in our methods of study. The perceptive faculties are scarcely ever sufficiently cultivated. We belong, in matters of education, to the Left Centre, not to the Extreme Left; but we do hope to see the day when Jackson’s *What to Observe*, or some similar book, shall become as recognised an instrument of mental discipline as *Euclid* or *Cæsar’s Commentaries*.

LETTERS ON MILITARY EDUCATION.*

THIS writer has been fortunate in his topic, and in the time of treating it, and he shows himself no mean master of those arts which have been reduced to a system by the journal in which we are familiar with his name. It is clear that the English army, at the outbreak of the war, was officered on a system which all sound and unbiased thinkers must condemn. It is equally clear that the discovery of the faults of that system was not originally made by *Jacob Omnium*, but that many lovers of their country desired to alter it at a time when they had little chance of the support either of the author or of the readers of these letters. For the state of our military arrangements two years back, all parties amongst us are perhaps almost equally to blame. Whatever might have been the merit of any scheme of change proposed in the long interval of peace, it would not have been adopted by the nation, nor would it even have obtained the countenance of the *Times*. But when the country was plunged into a great war, and was called upon for efforts so vast as to strain to the uttermost any system, however good, then of course the defects of our system became patent and notorious, and the task of exposing them was found to be easy, and not

unprofitable. Such an undertaking, too, offers this further advantage—that while the responsible advisers of the Crown cannot safely act without some interval of deliberation on various plans, this interval the *Times* and its correspondents can turn to excellent account, in loudly demanding action without a moment’s delay. The advice given by these busy writers to the Government in times of difficulty is like the advice of Mrs. Nickleby to her embarrassed husband—“Nicholas, do something;” but what that something should be, they leave the Government to find out. As one of the letter-writers has it, “public opinion, with its certain instinct,” discovered—that was no very profound mystery—that the constitution of the English War Ministry was far from perfect; but how to improve the machine, without at the same time throwing it out of gear, was a question upon which our usual oracles were obscure and contradictory.

It is, however, only fair to admit that the author of the letters before us did come forward, at the very time when difficulty existed, with something like specific suggestions for meeting it. *Jacob Omnium* appears to think that it is easy to devise some sort of examination which shall infallibly discover the fittest material for officers of every class. Now, undoubtedly there are various branches of knowledge useful to every officer, and necessary to many, in which a fair and strict examination, by paper or *vivâ voce*, or both, does afford a test of proficiency upon which complete reliance may be placed; but there are also many qualities essential to the good soldier which cannot be measured and valued off-hand, either in this manner or in any other which human ingenuity has hitherto suggested. Competitive examinations have become lately a fashionable specific for all the evils both of our civil and military administration; and the House of Commons, it seems, is eager to indorse the prescription. For some of these evils they promise to be a cure; but there are others incurable by this, or perhaps by any other special means. The head of a large commercial or manufacturing establishment probably owes his rise to that position partly to his skill in judging of the capacity of other men, and in turning their abilities to his own account. Upon this skill alone, therefore, he will rely in choosing his instruments, and he will never dream of employing a body of examiners to supersede the exercise of his own judgment. A good deal has been said of late of the great works and the admirable skill of our civil engineers, and they have been sometimes rather unduly magnified at the expense of the scientific officers of the army. This comparison is neither just in itself nor necessary to establish the undeniable reputation of the civilians. But how, let us ask, does an eminent engineer select assistants? Of course, he claims to exercise his own unfettered judgment in a matter which so deeply concerns his own professional reputation. He knows that a certain amount of book-learning is indispensable, and this he will be careful to insist on in his subordinates. But for other and more important qualifications, he looks partly to nature and partly to practical training; and he would reject at once the notion that any body of examiners could test the fitness of candidates in these respects. Now, we apprehend that the English system of leaving a general to select his own staff-officers depends upon the same principle. An English general, if he be an able and upright man, and has difficult duties to perform, will seek throughout the army for that combination of scientific knowledge, natural talent, and practical experience which will furnish him with the most reliable assistance. On the other hand, a French general has no choice whatever in the matter. The four hundred and twenty officers of the *corps d’état-major* were originally selected by competitive examinations, and have risen afterwards by seniority. It is certain that a French staff-officer will always possess an extensive fund of knowledge of which English staff-officers, to our shame, are frequently quite destitute. But it is equally certain that no man really worthy to command an army would consent, if he could help it, to have his choice of instruments confined to a limited number of individuals of whom he personally knows nothing. “Don’t tell me,” he would say, “that A. got 1100 and B. only 1000 marks in an examination some years ago. I know, by intimate personal acquaintance, that B. possesses, in the highest degree, all the most valuable military qualities; and if I am to lead this army to victory, I claim to choose such men as that to help me.”

We need scarcely say that we are not forgetting, nor would we for one moment conceal, the truth that the almost unlimited discretion hitherto allowed in our army facilitates, and has in fact been frequently abused to perpetrate, very gross and scandalous nepotism. But our complaint against *Jacob Omnium* and other writers of the same school is that they altogether disregard the faults and shortcomings of the foreign system, which they incessantly extol at the expense of their own country. Then, again, it does not necessarily follow that a staff-appointment is improper because it is that of a friend or relative. The impartial judgment of an able general must, we think, be admitted to be a better test of fitness than competitive examinations. But that judgment can only be exercised upon individuals of whom he has a thorough personal knowledge. We apprehend that even the most eminent of our civil engineers must select their assistants from among those whose character and qualifications they can estimate; and who are they so likely to know thoroughly as their own friends and relatives?

It may be very proper to insist that the possession of a certificate of a certain amount of knowledge shall be an indispensable condition for staff-employment. This is a widely

* *Letters on Military Education*. By Jacob Omnium. Bradbury and Evans, 1856.

different thing from pretending that the comparison of marks awarded by examiners furnishes an unfailling test of the various degrees of fitness for employment in the staff and all other branches of the army. But this latter proposition appears to be assumed by *Jacob Omnium* as so manifest that only the obstinate prejudices of the Commander-in-chief can have prevented its being acted upon to the full extent. It is quite refreshing to find a man of the world, and a writer in the *Times*, possessed of such an undoubted faith in examinations. In August last, *Jacob Omnium* advised that a preference in granting commissions should be given "to graduates from any of our universities of good character and robust frame." Time was when a B.A. with these recommendations merely had small choice between starving and getting ordained to a working curacy. How a man who had graduated at Oxford or Cambridge became thereby qualified for Holy Orders, some sceptics have found it difficult to understand; but such was the opinion received and acted upon by bishops. There was likewise a time, but rather longer ago, when the same man, if he united to his degree wealth or good connexions, was deemed peculiarly fit to sway the destinies of his country in Parliament and in the Cabinet. This opinion also, we grieve to say, has lost ground in the last half-century; and, therefore, we most sincerely congratulate the Universities on the new sphere of action which this popular instructor has devised for them. But why a B.A. "of good character and robust frame" should be thought to be specially fitted for a commission, we are utterly incapable of explaining. The old-fashioned notion that an officer must be a gentleman, would seem to square exactly with this suggestion; but then it happens that the letters of *Jacob Omnium* were written to combat that very notion, and to extirpate it from among the perverse blockheads at the Horse Guards. Looking at the gifts and accomplishments of some of our friends who have left Oxford or Cambridge with "a good character and a robust frame," we conclude that they would do in the Crimea exactly what has been done by those to whose places they are to succeed. They would have fought as well, and would have held their ground with the same wonderful tenacity against the enemy, the season, and the labours of an arduous siege. But we fear that they would have been generally open to the imputation of wanting "promptitude and ingenuity" in contriving shelter for horses, and even in mending their own trousers, and cooking ration-pork in a wholesome and palatable shape. These are useful arts, and pity it is that the true Briton does not feel that pleasure in their exercise which alone can enable him to excel in them. A Frenchman would rather make soup than do nothing—an Englishman would very much rather do nothing than make soup. We may lament the national defect, but cannot deny that it exists. Something may perhaps be done to remedy it; but we suppose that not even *Jacob Omnium*, in his new-born reverence for the Universities, will pretend that competitive examinations are likely to contribute to that result.

It is thought that General Windham, in the attack upon the Redan, displayed, in a very high degree, the qualities that make an able officer. But as no Board of Examiners will soon have an opportunity of trying such an experiment as that of the 8th September, and as the board might not survive to give their decision, it becomes material to inquire whether any other equally efficient test can be contrived. Now this is exactly the objection to the plan of competitive examinations which we should desire *Jacob Omnium* to remove. He talks a good deal, and very properly, of the importance to an officer of certain physical gifts, such as a sound and vigorous constitution, a quick eye, firm nerves, and a good seat on horseback. But will he seriously pretend that the possession of these qualities can be made, like mathematics and military history, a question of marks in an examination? Shall the Board adjourn to Leicestershire and observe how the candidates take their fences—or shall they start them all to row a race upon the Thames—or shall they request the editor of *Bell's Life* to organise a series of fistic battles, and to record, in proper technical language, the fortunes of every round, for the information of Lord Panmure? *Jacob Omnium* of course will say that he never contemplated anything so absurd as this; but, nevertheless, he describes the systems pursued abroad so as to lead thoughtless people to the belief that that which experience teaches is impossible in England is possible, and is actually done in France. Without exactly saying that an examination in "equitation" and "escrime" can be equally efficacious with an examination in algebra and chemistry, he contrives to produce an impression that "they manage these things better in France," and that, if we were only clever enough, we could construct a machine which should infallibly sift out the best staff-officers, and officers of every other class, from any number of candidates displaying every variety of human character. To pretend that such a fabulous perfection has ever been or can be attained, is the surest method of impeding sound and rational improvement in the organisation of the English army.

Since the publication of these letters, the war which gave occasion to them has ceased, and the question will soon arise how commissions are to be bestowed in time of peace. In case *Jacob Omnium* should think fit to address the *Times* upon this topic, we trust he will be more careful than he has been hitherto in selecting and stating the examples which are to support his arguments. In the second of his published letters, he tells a story of a subaltern who desired to purchase his company, but

was considered by the colonel of the regiment unequal to a captain's duties. The colonel, however, hesitated to report the opinion he entertained, and the "old-established practice of attempting to worry the obnoxious subaltern out of the regiment was preferred." But this persecution was stopped by the interference of the Horse Guards before the desired effect had been produced. The incompetent subaltern was allowed to purchase his company; and, when on service, he was surprised by the enemy and taken prisoner, together with the soldiers under his command. Now, this story, if true, conveys a weighty lesson, which is further enforced by Captain Basil Hall's anecdote of the remorse of an examining officer who had passed an incompetent candidate, and thereby, as he believed, occasioned the loss of a line-of-battle ship, with every soul on board. But *Jacob Omnium* goes on to "think that the Commander-in-chief of the period who wittingly allowed the poor fellow to force himself into a position for which he was notoriously unfit, must have felt on the occasion much as Captain Hall's friend felt." This, however, only proves that *Jacob Omnium* is ready to seize every occasion, fair or unfair, for a hit at the military authorities. For let us consider for one moment how totally different are the two cases. The naval officer passed a candidate whom he knew, by actual examination, to be incompetent. The Commander-in-chief knew only that the applicant for purchase had been drenched in his bed, and had had his head shaved, by his frolicsome companions. Surely it is not an inevitable inference from these facts that the subaltern was unfit to become a captain. The colonel who failed to report against his competency may have been culpable, but that very neglect appears to exonerate the Commander-in-chief. Lord Hardinge and his office have not been very popular of late, but still the maxim that "any stick will do to beat a dog" is capable of being too indiscriminately adopted.

It is argued in these letters that our army should not be officered from "the upper ten thousand" exclusively, but that military talent must be sought throughout our population, and that commissions should not be confined to "gentlemen." Various examples are quoted of eminent commanders of aristocratic or plebeian origin. On the one side, we have Condé and Turenne—on the other, the marshals of Napoleon. But in which class would our readers place Marlborough? Surely the English aristocracy are not mistaken in reckoning his splendid military genius as one of the chief ornaments of their order? *Jacob Omnium*, however, counts him on the other side, because, "as far as truth, honour, decency, and loyalty go, he was a most doubtful gentleman." He was in fact, according to this writer, a noble by birth, but a scoundrel by nature; and therefore the snobs of England may reckon him as one of themselves. The compliment has, we trust, been properly appreciated by the lower and middle classes of *Jacob Omnium's* fellow-countrymen.

THE ART AND ARTISTS OF GREECE.*

PROBABLY many readers will be glad to hear of a German work which tells the history of Greek Art neither in the bald fashion of an introductory manual nor with the elaborate pedantry of a German Dryasdust, but with that agreeable combination of philosophic insight, picturesque narration, and poetic enthusiasm, to be found only in minds that have prepared themselves for a special study by thorough general culture. Such a work is *Torso*, by Adolph Stahr, a writer whose *Jahr in Italien*—two volumes of Italian travel, exhibiting rare artistic feeling as well as knowledge—prepared its readers to welcome from him a book more exclusively dedicated to art. It is a book not written to settle vexed questions, or to present any new results of independent research, but simply to give such a view of Greek art as will enable ordinarily cultivated persons to understand its organic relation to human development, and to have an intelligent and appreciative enjoyment of its remains. Critics of a more negative disposition, and possibly of greater technical acquirement than Professor Stahr, will assail him for his too admiring attitude towards ancient art; and a certain tendency towards the oracular in his manner of writing will probably provoke them to detect many errors of statement or of judgment. But the "general reader"—by whom, we imagine, is usually meant a reader of no particular information—is likely to find *Torso* an acceptable book, which will conduct him through a pleasant region of knowledge without causing him the least weariness in the journey. German writers have too often the uneasy pace of the camel—they take us to many remote quarters which we could hardly reach without their aid, but they cause us much aching and grumbling in the process. Stahr, however, has a style as agreeable as the canter of a well-trained horse. If it ever divides our attention with his subject, it also divides our admiration.

Was Greek art a purely indigenous growth, or only a transplantation from the East? This question of genealogy, of course, presents itself in the first place to the historian, and with especial urgency to the German historian, who, of all others, feels constrained to *commencer par le commencement*. Winckelmann pronounced against the supposition of an Oriental origin; and German critics, more coerced by his authority than by arguments from facts and analogy, went on maintaining the same opinion

* *Torso. Kunst, Künstler und Kunstwerke der Alten.* Von Adolf Stahr. In zwei Theilen. London: D. Nutt.

long after it had been renounced by the best foreign critics. When at length Ludwig Ross returned from his travels in the Levantine countries, and brought evidence for the filiation of Oriental and Greek art, gathered from a careful investigation of art-remains, he was derided as a "Tourist"—a superficial man, who allowed his opinions to be modified by observation, instead of spinning them, as a philosophic spider should, from a theory-secreting sac provided for the purpose! However, since then, there have been plenty of German critics who have not only accepted the newer idea, but have been its most laborious and valuable illustrators. Stahr follows in their track, treating the question in a rapid and popular way. The reference of Greek art to an Oriental source brings it, he observes, under a generalization which is more and more confirmed by the discoveries of science and scholarship—namely, that

the process of development in culture and art is the same as that of natural products and their cultivation by man. Modern botanical research has proved that almost everything which is necessary, useful, and agreeable to us in the vegetable kingdom, came in a gradual procession from Asia, until it was arrested at the western coast of Europe. And now that after a short rest it has sprung across the Atlantic, this propagation pursues its course through America towards the West. But the West receives the gifts of the East only to refine the rude, to develop the imperfect, to ennoble the common.

In the Æginetan sculptures we see Greek art beginning to emancipate itself from Oriental and Egyptian symbolism, and advancing towards naturalism. But still, though the artist gave a high degree of finish to the limbs, he was incompetent or indifferent to the rendering of expression or character in the face. Athene is like the Trojans, and the Trojans are like the Greeks. In this respect the Æginetan sculptures present an interesting point of contrast with the works of Giotto, which hold a corresponding position in the development of Italian painting. Giotto and his immediate successors, in opposition to the early Greek artists, threw all their power into the face, and seemed to regard the body as an insignificant appendage to it. This difference in the order of artistic progress corresponds with the fundamental difference between Greek and Christian conceptions. To the Greek, a fine body was the primary condition of a fine mind; but to the spiritualism of the fourteenth century the body was but the transient and unworthy dwelling of the immortal soul, which flourished in proportion as the body was emaciated. Its canon of art was—

Give us no more of body than shows soul.

It seems a great leap to pass from the Æginetan sculptures to those of the Parthenon, in which we see art at its highest point of development as an essentially religious and political outgrowth. Yet we have no knowledge to fill up the chasm, and to show us how far the immense advance was due to the individual genius of Phidias, how far it was prepared by his predecessors. The age of Phidias, being the period of supreme interest in the history of Greek art, is naturally also the most delightful part of Professor Stahr's book. From inference, from historic details, and also from mythical anecdotes, which always have their historic significance, he forms as vivid a picture as can be obtained of Phidias in his position as an artist; he reconstructs the Parthenon, and enables us to imagine it as it stood in its glory; he tells the sad story of its destruction, and describes with very fine discrimination the fragments which remain to us—the only works we possess that come immediately and indisputably from the genius of Phidias. Among the sculptures which may with probability be regarded as copies from his originals, is one of the famous Colossi on the Monte Cavallo, and we single it out from the rest for the sake of giving a legend admirably characteristic of the mode in which the mediæval mind explained the relics of classic antiquity. The reader probably remembers that the Colossi just mentioned are two groups, each representing a man controlling a restive horse, one of them being inscribed with the name of Phidias, the other with that of Praxiteles. The legend we are going to quote is contained in an *Explanation of the Wonders of Rome*, written in monkish Latin of the twelfth century:—

In the time of the Emperor Tiberius (says the mediæval Winckelmann) there appeared in Rome two young philosophers, Phidias and Praxiteles, who showed themselves openly without any clothing. When the Emperor was informed of this, he summoned them before him, and asked them, Why they went about naked? They answered: "Because everything lies naked and open before our eyes, and because we regard the world as nought—therefore we go about naked and possess nothing." On account of this wisdom of theirs, the Emperor raised them high in his palace. But they boasted of such science that they knew everything the Emperor did, even when out of their presence, by day and by night, and could tell it him to a word; so they said to him: "We will tell thee everything thou hast spoken when away from us, by night in thy chamber." "If you do that," answered the Emperor, "I will give you whatever you desire." Thereupon they said: "We desire no money, but only a monument." The next morning they related to the Emperor, in order, the counsel he had held with himself in the preceding night, and the Emperor, as he had promised, founded for them the desired monument, namely, naked horses which tread the earth beneath their hoofs, that is, which trample on the powerful of this world who rule over men. But, as a sign that the mighty king will come, who will mount these horses, that is, will subdue the powerful ones of the earth, there stand by the horses two half-naked figures of men, who, with uplifted arm and clenched fist, announce what will then come to pass. And as they are themselves naked, so does all earthly knowledge lie naked before them.

The works of Polykleitos and Myron, the great contemporaries of Phidias, with those of Praxiteles and Scopas in the succeeding age, are subjects wide enough to carry us nearly to the end of the first volume—leaving room, however, for a long chapter on the Social Position of the Artist in Greece, and a discussion of

the colouring and nudity of Greek statues. Apropos of Scopas, who was the most fertile originator of grotesque ideal beings as attendants on the deities, Stahr observes that, when the Greeks conceived combinations of the human with the brute form, they made the upper part human and the lower part bestial, as in the centaurs, satyrs, mermaids, &c., while we see the reverse in the symbolism of the Egyptians. Like many other ingenious distinctions, however, this will not bear a very rigid examination. The sphinx, at least, might have occurred to him as a sufficiently remarkable exception.

Lysippus, whose history opens the second volume, was the first great master of portrait sculpture. But in all cases of origination or discovery, it is "the hour and the man," and not the man alone, that accomplishes the transition from the old to the new. Lysippus was the contemporary of Alexander, and with the Macedonian conquests began a new political relation for art. The glory of the individual was no longer checked by democratic jealousy—the days of royal patronage began, and art glorified royalty in return. An amusing indication of the change that had come over the spirit of art is the story told by Plutarch of the sculptor Stasikrates. This artist went to Alexander, and proposed to him to fashion Mount Athos into an imperishable statue of the conqueror of the world, which should touch the sea with its foot and the clouds with its head, holding in one hand a populous city, and with the other pouring a perpetual mountain torrent into the sea. Alexander was wise enough to bid him leave Mount Athos alone.

The revival of Greek art under Roman patronage is treated very fully by Professor Stahr; but we have touched on points enough in his agreeable volumes. They are easily accessible, and readers of German will find it worth while to look into *Torso* for themselves.

PORCELAIN.*

READERS of Charles Lamb—their name is Legion—will remember with delight the rhapsody on "Old China" which figures among the *Essays of Elia*. We confess we wish "Cousin Bridget" had kept sipping her hyson in silence, and not interrupted the discourse by her homily on the sweets of needy thrift. The poetry of cups and saucers would not then have come so soon to a close, and the *naïveté* which characterises "those little lawless azure-tintured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china teacup," would have been developed at greater length in those silvery strains of pathos which were ever gushing from the lips of Charles Lamb. We, too, can enter into what he calls his *almost feminine partiality* for old china, as if he had felt that between this fragile and delicate ware and that yet more delicate sex there existed bonds of fellowship to which man, that grosser clay, could not aspire. We, too, have never been wont to husband hidden wrath, or to consider ourselves victimized, when permission has been graciously offered us to enter the closet in which maiden or matron hoards, with just pride, the treasures of Cathay; and although we may have found it difficult to repress a smile, as we discovered that the possessor generally endeavoured to extort the largest tribute of our admiration on behalf of the most hideous specimen of her *κεμήλια*, we were wont to listen mutely and meekly—for our ignorance was crass—as the good dame expatiated on the transparency of her greens or the antiquity of her "old blues."

Now, however, the tables are turned. For the future, we shall no longer suffer the ladies to have all the talk to themselves, but shall occasionally put in a word of our own on the history and mystery of their ceramic wares. Armed with the facts which are so ably brought out in the book before us, we shall take the liberty of checking the full tide of praise which they lavish on the antiquity of cup or platter, and of calling their attention to certain Chinese characters thereon inscribed—which look for all the world like a group of mutilated gridirons—giving precise indications of the period when they came forth from the fabric in their native land. Or, if that will not suffice, we shall endeavour to show the fair amateurs that the nature of the design portrayed is incompatible with those notions of beauty, value, and antiquity, which they so sedulously and complacently espouse. If they still remain unconvinced, we must turn them over to the book, and leave them to judge for themselves. If they ask where it is to be had, we reply in the words of the title-page—

Pa-li-ting-ma-le-ba-che-lie-chou-sse-fa-khe—

which, of course, can only mean—as the public will see at a glance—"Se vend à Paris à la librairie de Mallet-Bachelier."

We trust that the reader will have gathered from the tenor of the above remarks, that the work to which we now call attention is not so exclusively of a scientific or industrial character as to be devoid of all elements of interest for the public at large. Doubtless its importance as a manual for men of the craft, and for men engaged in trade with China, can scarcely be over-rated; for a catalogue at the end of the volume contains clear and ample details as to the designations under which the various classes and qualities of por-

* *Histoire et fabrication de la porcelaine chinoise. Ouvrage traduit du chinois. Par M. Stanislas Julien, de l'Institut, etc. Accompagné de notes et d'additions par M. Alphonse Salvétat, Chimiste de la manufacture imp. de porcelaine de Sévres, etc.; et augmenté d'un mémoire sur la Porcelaine du Japon traduit du Japonais, par Dr. Hoffmann, professeur à Leyde. Paris: 1856. Mallet-Bachelier. Carte et planches.*

celain are known in the country where they are manufactured. Still it is interspersed with so much curious information, with so many amusing traits, that the general reader would do well not to be deterred by the appearance of a few unintelligible characters from the task of making himself familiar with its contents. We shall endeavour to give some idea of the value of the book under both these aspects.

In the year 1851, M. Stanislas Julien—one of the first Chinese scholars in Europe, who has already given to the world a condensed translation of Chinese treatises on silk-worms, and is now on the point of publishing a similar collection of works on all the industrial arts—was urged by the late M. Ebelmen to give a French version of Chinese documents on the history and fabrication of porcelain. Among the treasures of the *Bibliothèque Impériale* he found three works which amply sufficed for the objects he had proposed to himself. He studied them all with the greatest attention; and any doubts which he may have entertained as to which of the three he should select for translation, were at once abandoned when he discovered that not only had the authors of the *King-te-chin-thao-lou* (i.e. History of the Porcelain of King-te-chin, published in 1815) borrowed from the other two all the most important documents—arranging them at the same time with greater neatness and method—but also that they had taken from a large number of other works a host of curious and hitherto unpublished details. King-te-chin, we should observe, is the name of a district which, for upwards of eight centuries, has been the seat of the Imperial manufacture of porcelain. Its site, as well as that of all other factories in China, is indicated in a very interesting map, by M. Vivien St. Martin, of the Institute, which the reader will find annexed to the volume before us. The treatise thus selected for translation by M. Stanislas Julien consists, in the original, of ten books; but of these, only seven were found to be of a nature to interest or instruct European readers. Such of the details, however, in the remaining three as were worthy of preservation, have been made use of by the translator in compiling his preface—a preface of some eighty pages—on the history and topography of porcelain manufacture. The four first books present a curious picture of the history of porcelain in China generally, and at King-te-chin in particular; and in illustration of this portion of the work, the preface referred to gives a masterly *résumé* of most of the topics which can interest the antiquarian, the artist, the merchant, or the general reader. Of some deficiencies we shall presently have reason to complain. The three remaining books give full, and, in the main, clear details of all the processes which intervene between the collection of the aluminous and siliceous, the infusible and the fusible materials on the one hand, and the removal of the finished ware from the furnace, on the other. We have here invaluable elucidations, furnished us by one whose competency on such matters few will gainsay—we allude to M. Salvétat, the chemist attached to the Imperial Manufacture at Sèvres. His remarks not only explain the processes employed at King-te-chin, but also show in what respects they differ from those which have hitherto been in use at Sèvres. Nor is this all—fourteen plates at the end of the volume, copied from original Chinese drawings, present to the eye yet more forcible illustrations of the details in the body of the work. As a complement to all this, is added a memoir on the Porcelain of Japan—which will remind many of our readers of the Japanese exhibition last year in London—translated from the original by Dr. Hoffmann, Professor at Leyden, and Japanese interpreter of the Government “des Indes Néerlandaises.”

M. Stanislas Julien completed his portions of the work in October, 1851, and forthwith deposited his manuscript in the hands of the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, who had undertaken its publication. It lay idle in the bureau of that department for three years—a fact which we commend to the special notice of those who are enamoured with the ways of Continental Governments. It was ultimately returned to the author, with full permission to publish it as he might think proper. To this decision of the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, we are indebted for the invaluable co-operation of Mr. Salvétat and Dr. Hoffmann, as the work would otherwise have been given to the world without their elucidations—a loss which would most seriously have diminished its value.

At the outset of his preface, M. Stanislas Julien is naturally led to speak of the antiquity of Chinese porcelain. And here he falls foul of an eminent Egyptian scholar. Rosellini, it seems, in his great work on Egypt (tom. ii. p. 337), describes a small porcelain jar, found by himself in an Egyptian tomb which had never been opened before, and of which the date reached back to a Pharaonic period a little posterior to the eighteenth century before Christ. Sir F. Davis, in mentioning this circumstance (*The Chinese*, London, 1836, vol. ii. p. 261), adds that three small bottles of the same kind and material had been brought from Egypt by Sir Gardner Wilkinson. He admits that they were completely identical with the “snuff-bottles” fabricated in China in the present day, but could not withhold his belief in the theory of their extreme antiquity, to which such men as Rosellini and Wilkinson had set their seal. Subsequently, however, a personal interview with M. Stanislas Julien induced him to change his mind, on grounds which the latter represents as follows:—Since the Chinese abandoned purely ideographic characters, or picture-writing, up to the time when their writing assumed the definite form now used in printed books, they

invented six different kinds of characters, which bear the approximate dates of—I. B.C. 827–742; II. B.C. 213; III. B.C. 213–210; IV. B.C. 48–33; V. A.D. 147–167; VI. A.D. 265–419. Now, the characters used on two of the bottles (neither of them Rosellini’s) thus found in Egyptian tombs, belong to the fourth of these periods. Nor is this all. Mr. Medhurst, the interpreter to the English Government at Hong Kong, discovered, with the aid of some well-read natives employed by him as secretaries, that the inscriptions on both these bottles were taken from poets who flourished during the dynasty of the Thang, or in the eighth century of our era. So that, while the characters point to the first century, the words themselves prevent us from placing them further back than the eighth. Bottles bearing precisely the same inscriptions have been purchased in China within the last few years. All this seems very conclusive. We, at least, are totally unable to reconcile the discrepancy of some 3000 years which exists between the Egyptian and Chinese scholars respectively, by any process short of impeaching Rosellini’s veracity; for if it be indeed true that the bottle he speaks of was discovered in a tomb of the alleged date, never previously opened, it is scarcely sufficient, we venture to submit to M. Stanislas Julien, to dismiss the matter summarily, by averring that we are not called upon to explain how it got there. There is another point in the evidence which we should wish to have cleared up. M. Stanislas Julien gives us facsimiles of two bottles bearing those inscriptions in characters of the fourth period, which form an important link in his argument. It does not, however, appear whether these bottles are either of them absolutely identical with that discovered by Rosellini. Nay, it is not even explicitly stated whether this last had any inscription at all—a point, obviously, of the greatest importance. So that, if we were called upon to pronounce a verdict on the charge of hallucination brought against Rosellini by M. Stanislas Julien, we should be inclined to adopt the phraseology of Scotch law, and say, “Not proven.” Our author, indeed, alleges that porcelain was first known in China, under the dynasty of the Han, or between B.C. 185 and A.D. 87; but his arguments seem to us—we say it with the utmost deference—to be somewhat illogical. Official documents, he says, place the invention of common pottery, among the Chinese, in the year B.C. 2698. That no mention should be made of porcelain previous to the second century before our era, is certainly very remarkable. Conclusive, however, we can scarcely call it, when we consider that our fragmentary knowledge of Chinese documents should make us very cautious of building up theories on purely negative evidence such as that to which we are now called upon to submit.

There is another point on which we should have been glad to have had the benefit of M. Stanislas Julien’s opinion. We allude to the vexed question of the ancient “murrine vases,” spoken of by Martial as “painted”—by Propertius as “cups baked in furnaces”—and alleged by Pliny to have been first brought from Asia to Rome by Pompey, in the year B.C. 65. Men of great and varied attainments, from the time of Cardan, Salmasius, and Scaliger, down to the present day, have not hesitated to maintain that these vases were nothing but porcelain—a theory which is, in some degree, corroborated by Sir William Gell’s statement that, down to the middle of the sixteenth century, porcelain was known by the name of “Mirra di Smyrna. The Russian word for “glazing,” “murava,” may be merely an accidental coincidence, and is therefore little to the purpose. We presume, indeed, from our author’s silence, that he adopts, on this matter, the opinion espoused by Abel Rénusat, Creuzer, and others, who consider that these vases were made of fluor-spar. Still, we cannot but regret that he should have thought proper to give the go-bye altogether to a point of so much importance in the history of porcelain.

We must not forget, however, that our readers may prefer M. Stanislas Julien’s assertions to our more diffident conjectures. We may therefore state, as the result to be gathered from the book before us by those who yield implicit credence to its statements, that porcelain was first manufactured when the Han dynasty held the sceptre in China, and Augustus at Rome—that about the year A.D. 621, the extraordinary fame which attached to the wares of a certain Chinese artist, called Fao Yu, gave birth to such a spirit of emulation and of enterprise, that manufactures grew up apace on every side, especially at Tchang-nan, which ultimately (A.D. 1004) became, and is at the present day, under the name of King-te-chin, the seat of the Imperial manufacture, or Sèvres of China. The period when the art received the greatest extension was under the dynasty of the Ming (A.D. 1368–1457—the most perfect and highly-prized products, however, being comprised in the years 1426–1435. Introduced into Japan in the year A.D. 27, the natives of that country were, for twelve centuries, unable to compete successfully with the wares imported from their more skilled neighbours, till at length they contrived to worm the secrets of the craft from the Chinese; and about the commencement of the thirteenth century, the porcelain of Japan reached its highest perfection. From Japan it was imported to Europe by the Portuguese, in the year 1518. Nearly two hundred years, however, elapsed, before the true hard porcelain was first manufactured in Saxony—an achievement which has immortalised the name of Böttcher. As an illustration of the value attached to this ware after it became known in Europe, M. Stanislas Julien might have mentioned that Loret, in the *Muse Historique*—a kind of poetical newspaper of the seventeenth century—when

speaking of a banquet, *vraiment royal*, given by Cardinal Mazarin, in 1653, says of that minister—

Traita deux rois, traita deux reines,
En plats d'argent, en porcelaines.

A manufacture of soft porcelain was founded at St. Cloud in 1697; but not till 1770 was the genuine Chinese process, or *hard* porcelain, introduced at Sèvres, where it ended by completely supplanting the famous *pâte tendre*, of which specimens are so much coveted by opulent virtuosi.

Some of the most curious and entertaining portions of the work before us—and here we come to its popular aspect—are the anecdotes introduced by the author from original documents, which show that the Chinese are not behind the more civilized nations of Europe in their mania for specimens of the best eras of porcelain manufacture. In the sixteenth century, we find that an artist of the Imperial establishment at Tehang-Nan created such a furor among his countrymen, that 300*l.* was no uncommon price for amateurs to give for any of his productions. In some cases, where nothing but fragments of broken porcelain of extreme antiquity have been preserved, such is the passion entertained for them that they are strung on silk and worn as a necklace, or else suspended to the head-dress. There is a Chinese work by one Lo-yu, often quoted by the author of the *History of the King-te-chin Porcelaine*, which treats of porcelain solely in its connexions with tea. We there find objections raised to certain wares from the colour they give to the liquid they contain. Yellow porcelain, for instance, makes the tea look brown, and is scouted accordingly. The gentleman who asked for a chair for his cup, because his tea was too weak to stand, might have consoled himself with these indications of pale-coloured tea being the most prized by the Chinese themselves. There is another trait we have met with in this book, which does not speak highly of the gallantry of the Chinese. We give it in the author's own words. "Although the vases called Yang-tse, and others of the same kind, have beautiful colours and please the eye, still they are deficient in elegance, lustre, and delicacy. They might, indeed, do for the women's apartment, though scarcely even that. They are certainly unfit to decorate the houses of men of letters or of magistrates." Throughout the work, in fact, *porcelaine à l'usage des magistrats* is almost a convertible term for the choicest ware.

SHAKESPEARE A LA SAND.*

GEORGE SAND seems anxious to wed her reputation to that of Shakspeare. We forbid the banns. A more unsuitable match we could not well conceive. Marvellous, nay, monstrous, are the powers of misapprehension revealed in the work before us. The beauties that are missed, the characters that are marred, the airy grace that *was*, but is no more, the wealth of wit and wisdom that is squandered and misapplied—all confirm the wisdom which moved the most distinguished of living French critics to declare, that "Shakspeare was an author whom no one ought to imitate, least of all should he be imitated by fragments, taken to bits, altered, and patched; give him as God and nature made him, or do not give him at all; in the originality and power of his creations there is a something which none of the trickery of modern art can surpass, and which to correct, is to corrupt."† Accordingly, when Madame Sand states that to translate Shakspeare literally is out of the question—and when she has the impudence to add that if, in any case, it be allowable to curtail, select, and expurgate, it must be in the case of that *génie sauvage qui ne connaît pas de frein*—she does more than betray the most astounding ignorance of that translation of Shakspeare which has made the names of Tieck and Schlegel almost co-eternal with that of the Bard of Avon. She also proves how utterly incapable she is of appreciating the beauties and of spanning the length, breadth, and height of Shakspeare's genius, in spite of powers which all must admit to be versatile and vigorous, and notwithstanding the incense of praise which her preface offers up at Shakspeare's shrine.

There is an amusing jumble of temerity and timidity in the mode adopted by Madame Sand to designate the play. First, on the cover of the book, as well as on the title-page proper, you have the words which are here given in the foot-note. The phrase *tirée et arrangée* somewhat palliates the calumny perpetrated by Madame Sand in daring to associate the name of "Wild Will" with so contemptible a performance as *Comme il vous Plaira*. Between the cover and title-page, however, is inserted a fly-leaf, on which is inscribed, first the English, and then the French name of the play, and nothing more—thus leading the unhappy victims in the pit, stalls, and boxes of the Comédie Française to entertain the miserable delusion that what they see on the stage is a tolerably exact reproduction of what Shakspeare wrote. In adopting the generally-received translation of the title, we could have wished that Madame Sand had given us the benefit of her opinion as to its meaning. The popular view on this subject is founded on Rosalind's words in the epilogue—"I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of this play as pleases you;" and that this is the correct view, seems probable from the short address prefixed to

the *Rosalynde* of Thomas Lodge—the romance from which Shakspeare borrowed the story of *As you Like it*—where the writer says, "If you like it, so; and yes I will be yours in duty, if you be mine in favour." On the other hand, these may be merely undesigned coincidences of expression, on which it is not safe to build; so that, without pretending to any unnecessary subtlety, we think it may be questioned whether the theories of more than one German scholar of repute, which go to prove—we quote Schlegel's *Dramatic Literature*—"that the poet's design was to show that to call forth the poetry which has its indwelling in nature and the human mind, nothing more is wanting but to throw off artificial constraint, and restore both to mind and nature their original liberty," be not worthy of more consideration than they have commonly met with. According to this view, the title would indicate the total freedom, amid the grassy glades of Ardennes, from all the conventionalisms of ordinary society—which is certainly preferable to Tieck's notion of its being intended as a reply to a gasconade of Ben Jonson's in the epilogue of *Cynthia's Revels*. For our own part, we conceive that the opening of the forest scene in the third act, beginning—"And how like you this shepherd's life, Mr. Touchstone?"—would, when combined with the general tenor of the play, give room for a third theory, the purport of which, as gathered from the profound jesting of Touchstone's answer, would be that it is not for man to dogmatize on the superiority of one sphere of existence over another, to set town against country, or cloister against court. Happiness and virtue can make their abode as well in the forest of Ardennes as within the shadow of the Palace of Navarre. Not on conditions of time or place do these depend—your likings and mislikings are of your own creation—in any and every sphere of life, the conscientious discharge of duty, the *nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa*, will, if you like it, bring a fund of peace which outward circumstances cannot augment or diminish.

As Madame Sand boasts that, although she felt it incumbent on her to eschew the verbal accuracy of a literal translation, she has at least had it in her power to save from complete oblivion—very kind of her, certainly!—some of the most beautiful portions of the play, we do not think it useless to inquire how far her professions are borne out by her performances. In Shakspeare, as the reader will not need to be told, Orlando and Rosalind are the principal characters. Orlando is one whom fortune has roughly handled, but whose purity of life and conversation has enabled him to escape that snarling, cynical spirit which not unfrequently mars the "sweet uses of adversity." The briers with which this "working-day world" is beset have been powerless on one whose path has been ever upward, and whose feet have been shod with virtue. Called upon to rail against mankind, he modestly replies, "I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults." Gloomy indeed he certainly is—gloomy almost to despair; and this it is which prompts his heartrending answer to the Princesses, when they endeavour to deter him from trying the strength of his youth with the Duke's wrestler, Charles. Every word of that answer is full of calm, deep melancholy—but of melodramatic, hypochondriac railing there is not a vestige. He only states, in simple language, sad, stern facts. He nothing exaggerates, and nought sets down in malice. Even the author of his misfortunes, the brother who has defrauded him of his rights and riches, does not come in for a single accent of murmuring or execration—just as, in a subsequent part of the play, he again rewards evil for good by saving this wrong-doer's life at the expense of his own. And yet this is the man whom Madame George Sand, at the very outset of the play—her play—presents to us as a mere gallant, bent on seeing the belles and beaux of the Court. As if to set off yet more forcibly the inward satisfaction which, amid the rudest buffets of outward circumstances, anchors the heart and hopes of one who, like Orlando, has kept himself unspotted from the world, Shakspeare introduces the character of Jaques—a character strictly of his own creation—which he has added along with Touchstone, William, and Audry, to the *dramatis personæ* with which Thomas Lodge had supplied him. Madame Sand declares herself to be peculiarly enamoured of this individual; but the words in which he is addressed by the exiled Duke will give us a not very favourable idea of the description of person on whom she sets her affections:—

For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
As sensual as the brutish sting itself;
And all the embossed sores and headed evils,
That thou with license of free foot hast caught,
Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world.

It may indeed be urged that Madame Sand is not the only person who has taken this amiable view of "melancholy Jaques," and so overlooked what we hold to have been Shakspeare's undoubted intention of portraying a man whom a life of grovelling sensuality has left a prey to all that cold, cynical moroseness which is the joyless portion of the wordling who has been nauseated by satiety of lust. Few, however, we apprehend, even among those who may have entertained inadequate or imperfect notions of Shakspeare's design, will be prepared for an absurdity so monstrous as that of looking upon Jaques as a forerunner of Molière's *Misanthrope*, Aleaste. Having once committed herself to this atrocious blunder, it was only natural that Madame Sand should find in Celia a remedy for the wounds inflicted on her hero by some imaginary Celimène. We say "her

* *Comme il vous Plaira*. Comédie en trois actes et en prose, tirée de Shakspeare et arrangée par George Sand. Paris: 1856.

† Villemain, *Cours de Littérature*, 44^{ème} Leçon.

hero," for the result of these most sagacious innovations is, that Orlando and Rosalind yield their place, as the principal characters, to Jaques and Celia, who are ultimately—*Risum teneatis!*—joined in wedlock. To us it is perfectly unaccountable how a writer of such undoubted talent and experience can have been guilty of a proceeding which would have disgraced the veriest novice in the craft. Had there been anything particularly immoral in the alterations thus introduced, we could have understood how the force of inveterate habit might have induced her to prefer them to Shakspeare's construction of the plot. Beyond the fact, however, that Celia forces herself upon the acceptance of Jaques with a vehemence not quite consistent with our notions of decorum, we really cannot detect anything of sufficiently gross impropriety to enlist on its behalf all that Madame Sand can command of seductive in style, or artistic in plot. It is only due to the spectators at the Théâtre Français to state that the great reputation of the author did not avail to win them from the side of reason and common sense. High, indeed, were the hopes of all when the curtain rose, but heavy were the eyelids ere it fell. Cold and dead beyond description was the feeling of the audience. So much pains had been taken to foster the idea that Madame Sand was about to present the Parisians with a tolerably exact reproduction of *As You Like It*—copies of which it was announced were to be had at the theatre—that it may be feared a vast majority of those who were present would vent their disgust in abusing Shakspeare. Here and there, indeed, there were bits which roused the lethargic indifference of the audience, but it is noteworthy that these were passages where most accuracy had been shown in rendering Shakspeare's own words. Take, for example, the famous piece on the *Seven Ages*, of which our readers may be glad to have before them George Sand's version, which was not attempted, however, till the whole passage had undergone a violent dislocation:—

J'ai vu l'éternelle représentation de la vie humaine, comédie en sept actes. D'abord le pauvre marmot qui vagit et bave aux bras de sa nourrice. Ensuite, l'écolier pleurant, avec sa sacochette, et sa face vermeille comme le matin, se traînant à l'école à contrecœur et à pas d'escargot. Puis l'amant plaintif aux soupirs de flamme, chantant sur un air usé les charmes toujours nouveaux de sa maîtresse. Mais le voilà soldat! ombrageux et violent, la bouche pleine de jurements étranges, portant moustaches de léopard, il court jusque sous la gueule du canon après cette bulle d'air qu'on appelle la gloire. Attendez! voici le magistrat, nourri de gras chapons, portant avec orgueil son beau gros ventre, et sa barbe taillée avec méthode: il a l'œil sévère, et débite à tout propos de graves maximes, et des sentences rebattues. Puis arrive le sixième âge, un pâle Cassandre, avec ses pantoufles, ses lunettes sur le nez, ses poches sur les côtés: les chaussures de sa jeunesse, plus durables et mieux conservées que sa personne, flottent trop larges sur sa cuisse amaigrie: sa voix est devenue un fausset qui bégaye, et siffle, comme celui d'un enfant. Enfin la dernière scène, celle qui vient clore cette fatigante lixtoire de la vie, une seconde enfance, un état d'oubli stupide, un fantôme sans yeux, sans dents, sans goût, sans rien! . . .

It may not be superfluous to state, that the name "Cassandre," by which Madame Sand with questionable propriety, renders "pantaloon," is the French form of Casnar—an Oscan title of one of the personages in the old *fabula attellana*, or country farces of ancient Italy. The more common designation, however, of the same personage, of whom the tradition has been preserved in the Venetian *Pantalone*, was "Pappus," the epithet of old Silenus in the Greek satyric drama. We confess we feel thankful to Madame Sand for this version of the *Seven Ages*. We rise from the perusal of it with tenfold admiration for the original, to which it serves as a foil.

On the whole, the preface appears to us to be the best part of the work. It is in the shape of a letter to M. Regnier, one of the brightest ornaments of the *Comédie Française*; and if we could put aside for a moment all thought of the absurdities occasionally enunciated with reference to Shakspeare in general, and *As You Like It* in particular, we should not hesitate to call it one of the finest bits of writing which have ever flowed even from the pen of George Sand. Especially remarkable are the sentences, not less eloquent than profound, in which she unfolds what may be called that psychological aspect of theatricals which the Greek may be said to have had before him—how came she to overlook the fact?—when he associated the word *ecstasy*, or "desire to get out of self," with those scenic representations which accompanied the festival of Dionysius. To the principles of purity and morality which she professes to advocate in other parts of this preface, greater weight would probably be attached if the reader could divest himself of all recollection of the author's antecedents. In spite of the disguise she thus assumes as a priestess of propriety, it is impossible to forget that she has placed her name to works which are the lasting disgrace of French literature, and which, as outrages to decency and morality are all the more dangerous from the transcendent ability of the writer by whom they have been perpetrated.

THE DRUSES OF LEBANON.*

COULD we have foreseen the nature of the present volume before we opened it, we do not know that we should have troubled our readers with any notice of it. But having undertaken to read it, and having actually got through the greater portion, it is a sort of relief to review it. We have been greatly

disappointed in its perusal, having sat down to the volume in the loneliest expectation of something much better. The subject is one of extreme interest, and one which, even in the present age of Eastern travels, has remained comparatively unacknowledged. The author, apparently a native and resident in the country, and familiar with its language, had good opportunities for information; and we may add that the title somewhat prepossessed us in its favour. Mr. Chasseaud did not call his book *From Lebanon to Long-acre, or From Beyrout to Burlington-street*. He promised us, plainly enough, some account of the manners, customs, and history of the Druses, with a translation of their religious code. The latter, which we will not suppose to be other than an accurate translation of an authentic document, is of course of no small value. But Mr. Chasseaud's volume may be looked through in vain for any clear and connected account of the "manners, customs, and history" of the extraordinary people with whom he deals. We do not, of course, say that no information on these subjects can be picked up from it; but it has to be picked up from among a mass of matter as utterly feeble in style and irrelevant in purpose as we have come across for a long time.

We said that Mr. Chasseaud's title prepossessed us in favour of his book; and in one sense our expectations have not been belied. Unlike most travellers—especially Oriental travellers—he is at least in earnest. He does not think it necessary to make a joke of his subject. Only about once that we remember does he affect the hop-skip-and-jump style which seems now-a-days considered appropriate to the subject. Mr. Chasseaud, as we gather incidentally from a passage in his book, is an extremely young man—*à priori*, we should have set him down for one who had written a book in advanced life without previous literary experience. His faults are not those of youth, but of old age. Something either of flippancy or of boisterous mirth may be pardonable in a young writer; but Mr. Chasseaud, though not many years out of his teens, has already acquired the feeble garrulity of patriarchal age. His errors are twaddle, verbiage, incoherency, a perpetual affectation of the "high polite style." Some faults mend themselves as they go on; but we fear this is not likely to be the case with those of Mr. Chasseaud.

Our author tells us in his preface:—

If anyone take up this work on the Druses of the Lebanon with the expectation of meeting with profound speculations or original views, he will probably be disappointed. I have merely spoken of things as I have really seen them. I tell "straight on what I myself do know," and endeavour, in an easy and familiar manner, to lay before the reader a sketch of the character, manners, customs, history, and possessions of the Druses.

Now we do not at all require "profound speculations or original views." If they are really profound and original, we are quite ready to welcome them; but in a book of this sort we can do perfectly well without them. All that we want is plain facts, observed with good sense, and recorded with clearness, vigour, and arrangement. Take, for instance, one of the best books of our time, and on a subject quite cognate with Mr. Chasseaud's—Sir Gardner Wilkinson's *Dalmatia and Montenegro*. Or, if this standard be too high, take those parts of Mr. Layard's first work—to us by far the most interesting parts—which do not relate to Nineveh. Mr. Layard's Yezidis and Nestorians are not easily forgotten; but we should know extremely little of Druses and Maronites had we no other means of information than what Mr. Chasseaud gives us. What we complain of is, that he does not give us any straightforward account of these same Druses. We have neither the vivid simplicity of a well-written journal, nor the graver merits of a work giving the results of inquiry. A certain amount of information about the Druses peeps out from a mass of wearisome and irrelevant twaddle.

For example, the seventh chapter commences with the strikingly original reflection, "What a beautiful thing is night—" though the remark, made without qualification by Coleridge, is by Mr. Chasseaud limited both as to time and place—"when seen and felt upon the summits of Lebanon in the balmy mouth of June." After contemplating the stars for some while, our philosopher burst forth into several pages of rapturous fine writing about the past history of Lebanon. The great idea is that the same moon seen by Mr. Chasseaud was also seen by Moses. The disobedient followers of Dathan and Abiram disappeared, we are reminded, in yawning chasms; and the trembling children of Israel (who trembled more as they witnessed this, and, according to Chasseaud, not according to Moses, "repented then of the evil") are themselves long since mingled with the dust. The surface of the earth has been changed; rivers have altered their courses, mountains have crumbled to dust, the sea has retreated and encroached, &c.; but the moon is safe up above in the sky, preserved from all change. Her mother, indeed, according to the fable, did once doubt how to clothe her, because she altered her shape so often; but she is essentially the same to all generations—"the same moon cast her mantle of light over the very earth that covered the rebellious multitude, shining then as unclouded and serenely as she shines this night over Lebanon."

The experience of the moon, then, is pretty considerable. She seems to have witnessed many important events. The "herd clerks" of King Hiram praised her "clear unclouded moonlight" when they were cutting down cedars for Solomon's Temple; she even saw, apparently with tolerable equanimity, "the sun of Israel set" and the "star of Christianity rise over the summit of the snow-capped mountains." But one event seems to have

* *The Druses of the Lebanon: their Manners, Customs, and History. With a Translation of their Religious Code. By George Washington Chasseaud, late of Beyrout, Syria. London: Bentley.*

rather upset her. Sun and stars were allies rather than competitors—but an opposition moon was too much:—

The disciples of Mahomet had overcome the land—the Cross was trampled down—the Koran and the crescent preached to all tribes—and the same moon, looking down with placid beam, beheld, reflected in her rays, a gaudy mockery of her younger self.

Banners with crescent moons, and lofty minarets topped with gilded emblems of the same, reared themselves in plains and upon mountains, and overtopped the stateliest trees."

One extract we must give a little more at length. Fakereddeen, the most celebrated of the Druse emirs, was, it seems, a little man, and somebody twitted him with being so—*μικρὸς μὲν ἦν ἐν δέμας ἀλλὰ μαχητὴς*. Let us see what followed, with Mr. Chasseaud's comment:—

Discomforted by the allusions made with reference to his stature, the renowned Fakereddeen is reputed to have composed a stanza remarkable for its pithy evidence of bearing testimony to the fact, that however insignificant the appearance of humanity, we are not thereby supposed to form any adequate judgment of the attainments or personalities of individuals. If we may be permitted to pause, without any inconvenience to the readers of this simple history, the remark is applicable even to the present generation of mankind. How often does it happen, that the smallest and apparently most insignificant specimens of humanity are possessed of a vital power far beyond our comprehension, and sometimes of an eloquence amounting to enthusiasm! It may not be—for in fact it must not—be considered as in any light derogatory to particular personages, if we specify a few proofs of this peculiar theme, universally acknowledged, even by the little-tutored people of that age. Dr. Johnson was a bear in manners, yet a marvel in intellect. Napoleon himself, beyond refutation the greatest general that ever trod upon the earth, was unfavoured by nature, as far as regards personal appearance. And to be more apt, our own hero—the Emperor's greatest enemy and only victor—we allude to the late Duke of Wellington, was a person of no prepossessing, that is to say, of no distinguished mien. And if we come down to persons flourishing—or, alas! be it written, who have briefly flourished—that gifted man, Eliot Warburton, who could write and describe lands familiar to these very people whose various positions we are now endeavouring to discuss, was a modern and more elegant, a more refined specimen of the Dr. Johnson style, yet of such fragile texture, so small limbed, and so disproportioned in stature, that were men to reckon intellect by size or appearance, the renowned author of *The Crescent and the Cross* would have dwindled into insignificance.

It is, however, a remarkable incident, perhaps very foreign to the nature of this book, yet still bearing a collateral signification in reference to the undaunted Druse commander, Fakereddeen, that the most remarkable warriors, statesmen, authors, and diplomatists have been almost invariably men of insignificant stature; there is no occasion to travel further than through the pages of the history of our own country, or to the records of renowned heroes who have been brought in contact with our own victorious admirals and generals. Wellington and Napoleon, the renowned Tippoo Saib, and the equally famous Washington, of America, are well known to have been disproportionate to what is usually characterised as a fine-made man; Andrea Riadoria, Nelson, and the unfortunate Bandiera, were nautical specimens of caskets of great value, contained within diminutive space; Pitt was a small man, and Pope notoriously insignificant; yet all these, individually, have aided to shed a lustre upon the pages of the records of human prowess, if anything can be said to be fine or magnificent in connexion with the fallen race of man.

Yet, I presume, that, like the various stewards quoted by our Redeemer, every man, according to his gift, is expected to expand and to confer some benefit upon his neighbour; and so in a small, yet for that part significant manner, did Fakereddeen shed a temporary lustre upon the historical records of the Druse chieftains.

We have not much more to say of Mr. Chasseaud. Perhaps the only occasion when he falls into flippancy is in an elaborate imaginary picture of a Druse girl introduced to a fashionable London house. This is coupled with some speculations why an English peasant girl would be quite out of place in the latter, while the Druse maiden would feel herself at once at home in the harem of the Grand Turk. Surely, because the harem of the Grand Turk is only a piece of splendid barbarism—more essentially barbarous, indeed, than the monogamous household of the Druse. About as profound is what seems to be his ultimate conclusion as to the people with whom he is dealing:—

Although the beginning or the origin of the Druses, however, is and must ever remain an unsolvable mystery to the curious, it is feasible and plausible to suppose that this peculiar sect originated with the freemasons that followed upon the steps of Solomon. There is a mystery which has ever remained closed or a sealed secret, and so it is with the Druses.

Mr. Chasseaud is exceedingly fond of biblical twaddle; yet he knows so little of the book of Genesis as to describe Lot as the brother-in-law of Abraham. Nor is he more lucky with profane writers. Here is what he quotes from "the pages of an old and familiar work, the study of which has cost many a brave man worse than the pangs of martyrdom." We copy Mr. Chasseaud's Latin *verbatim*:—

*Ille magis artes Ænaque carmina novit,
Inque caput liquidas arte ricurvat aquas
Sed bene quid gramen, quid tortoo confeta rombo
Licia, quid valeat virtus anantis equæ.*

And now for a few words as to the Druses themselves. They have naturally attracted the notice of De Sacy and other learned Orientalists, and an excellent popular account of them may be found in Dr. Cooke Taylor's *History of Mohammedanism*. They occupy a position in Asia somewhat analogous to that of the Montenegrins in Europe. Their independence of the Porte is less complete; but against this may be set that, while the Montenegrins are merely one fragment of a nation which has retained its liberty after the subjugation of the rest, the Druses are a people entirely apart by themselves. Their religion cannot be called Mahometanism, unless we are prepared to call Mahometanism Christianity, and Christianity Judaism. A whole theological system unknown to the Koran is united with religious reverence for a long line of prophets since Mahomet. Sheism is an eccentric form of Islam; Ishmaelism, again, an eccentric form of Sheism; Drusism, again, is a most

eccentric form of Ishmaelism. All are produced by corrupting the pure monotheism of the Koran with the old Oriental notion of incarnations of the Deity, which in the Druse system attains its climax in the deification of the odious Egyptian Caliph Hakem. Perhaps the Druses may be considered as about as much Mussulmans as the Mormons are Christians. We may, however, observe that the code translated by Mr. Chasseaud speaks of Mahomet with great reverence, just as a Mahometan does of Christ, or a Christian of Moses, while the document quoted by Dr. Taylor mentions him with an execration.

The Druses have never been fully subdued by the Ottoman power. Sometimes they have maintained entire independence—sometimes, just as happened with the Gothic kings under the Western Empire, it has been found convenient for both parties that the Druse emirs should assume the character of Turkish governors. At present, according to Mr. Chasseaud, they are untaxed, but subject to the conscription. One would have thought that some small tribute instead would have better suited both sides. Probably they are regarded as liable to it, just like the Yezidis, because they do not belong to any recognised sect of infidels, like Jews and Christians. Mr. Chasseaud describes them as enthusiastically loyal to the Sultan, which seems odd, as they are neither Turkish in blood nor Mahometan in creed.

The present condition and future prospects of this singular race are a highly interesting subject, which we can only wish had fallen into hands better qualified to deal with it than those of Mr. Chasseaud.

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